





*Sea Calm*



LEWIS BAUMER

*Wind Freshening*



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## Charivaria

"WHAT name can we give a man who is in a public-house from opening time till closing time?" asked a magistrate recently. How about "the landlord"?

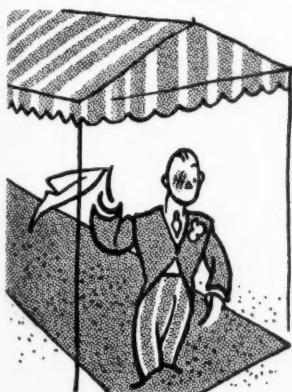
o o

"Tomb of supposed father-in-law of King Solomon found in Egypt."—*Daily Telegraph*.

Any particular father-in-law?

o o

A glass razor-blade, we read, will soon be on the market. This will enable one's wife to have a peep at herself before sharpening her pencil.



"Is it customary for the best man to kiss the bride after the ceremony?" asks a correspondent in a contemporary. Yes—but not too long after.

o o

Guardsmen now form threes instead of fours. On the barrack triangle?

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### Anybody Against?

"Regret cannot supply Dictator, so we propose sending Utopia instead, unless you disagree."—*Letter from Nursery Gardener*.

o o

"Empires have fallen since Hollywood became Hollywood," says a writer. Hippodromes too have felt the competition of the films.

o o

An octogenarian who unexpectedly inherited a fortune had his three long-lost boys returned to him the following week. Be sure your sons will find you out.

o o

"The London police have the measure of criminals," states a writer. By the Yard, of course.

A talking picture is to be made on the pier at a seaside resort. Perhaps this will provide the answer to "What are the wild waves saying?"

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### A Candid Contemporary

"What he said was an odd mixture of sense & nonsense. He has obviously studied the Opinion column of the Daily Express attentively. . . ."—*William Hickey in the "Daily Express."*

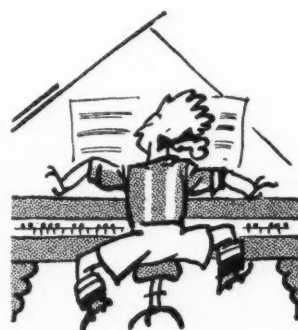
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A man arriving on the platform of a suburban station the other morning was ostracised by his fellow-passengers. Apparently he had deliberately pruned his roses in defiance of Mr. MIDDLETON's warning that it was too early.

o o

In 1764, we read, MOZART lived in Chelsea and frequently paid visits to Highbury and Tottenham. He did not, however, actually play for any of these clubs.

o o



"Birkenhead District Hairdressers' Association is considering plans to form a local registration of hairdressers, to prevent undercutting in the trade."—*Local Paper*.

Only a little bit off the top will be allowed.

o o

An R.A. complains that they have erected swings and roundabouts right opposite the window of his studio. His further outlook seems to be mainly fair.

o o

We understand that things have been so quiet in the British film industry recently you could hear the smaller executives dropped.

o o

An explorer says he has travelled through remote parts of Central Africa with only a pistol and a volume of poetry. The two Brownings?



## Dizzerplin

"NOW, gennlemen," says the Chief, "I dessay you're wonderin' why you're lined up like this 'ere. Well, I'll tell you. It's because the time 'as come when Great Baconfold Auxilary Fire Service 'as got to 'ave Dizzerplin. From now hon this A.F.S. is goin' to be in the Public Heye, an' the Public Heye likes to see Dizzerplin. An' quite rightly. No self-respectin' woman wants to be rescued from a blazin' 'ouse by a man with 'arf a cigarette in 'is mouth an' 'is cap slopin' the wrong way. All right, Mr. Mooney—no hoffence intended.

"Another thing, gennlemen. 'Itherto I 'ave addressed you as 'gennlemen,' as bein' right an' proper from one gennleman to other gennlemen. From now hon you ceases to be gennlemen an' becomes a squad, the word 'squad' bein' derivated from the word 'squadron' an' 'indicatin' a small body of men on parade. An' mark this, if you please. When I tells you sarcastic-like to 'old your great ugly 'eads up, I don't mean it personal. It's Dizzerplin.

"Very well. The formation you are now hin is technickly known as Two Deep or Hin File. The position you are now hin is the Stan'-at-ease position. Hevery man should 'ave 'is 'eels twelve hitches apart 'is 'ands be'ind 'im the right 'and restin' in the palm of the left the thumbs crossed. What's that, Mr. Mooney? Superstition 'as nothin' to do with it.

It's a reggalation, an' you'll kindly cross them thumbs. Yours not to reason why—Shakespeare'll tell you that. 'Istory negleks to hinform us whether 'e was an Auxilary Fireman, but 'e knew 'is stuff all right where Dizzerplin was concerned. No question but what 'e'd 'ave crossed 'is thumbs hif called upon so to do hin defence of 'is country.

"So much by way of diversity. Now then: in a moment I shall give the command 'Squad—shun!' an' when I do I hexpect hevery man to bring 'is left foot smartly up to the right, clickin' the 'eels, an' 'is 'ands smartly to 'is sides, thumbs in line with seams of trousers if any. Stop that laughin', please! You'll not take me amiss, Mr. Mooney, hif I points out that 'ilarity is hout of place hon parade. Hoff parade I likes my bit of fun same as you, but this Auxilary Fire Service 'as got to keep its face straight in the ranks like any of 'Is Majesty's forces. My suggestion to you, an' one I've hoften used myself when tempted to be cheerful hon parade, is to hoccupy the mind with the present Government.

"Very good, then. Squad—shun! Stan' at—ease! Shun! What's the matter, Mr. Mooney? Rubber boots won't click—very true. Well, they've got to click. Love will find out a way, says Shakespeare. It's the same with Dizzerplin. If you can't prodooce enough noise by slammin' that left 'eel in, make a click with your tongue,

same as if you was drivin' a norse. An' don't look at your boots. Look to your front, gazin' at an 'ypocritical point about your own 'ighth above the ground.

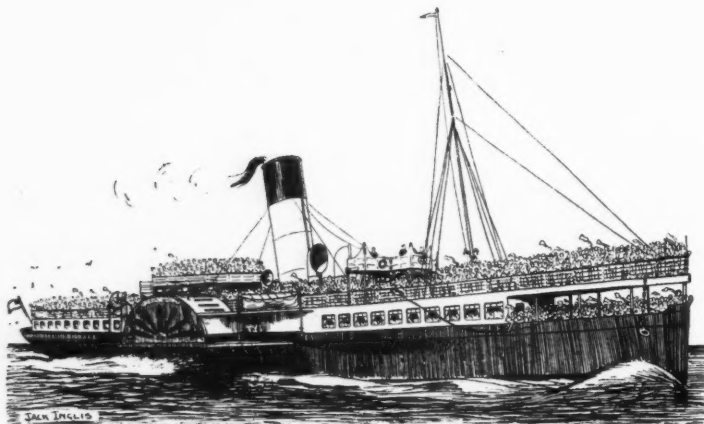
"That's better. Now, at the word 'Dismiss' the 'ole squad will turn smartly to the right, make a short pause, an' then break hoff.

"Before you dismiss I got a few things to say. Rumour 'ath it as some of you 'as been criticisin' the horganisation of the A.F.S. Well, gennlemen, they tell me this country's still a democracy, an' I don't want to come the 'Itler over you. What's more, I'm ready to agree as they've give us 'oses that are too long, overalls presumptuously made for helefants, no boots an' the most ludicious white 'ats I ever see. But don't criticise, gennlemen: it ain't Dizzerplin an' it gives them furrin propagandists a 'andle against us. If you must criticise, 'ave a slam at the Government. It's there for the purpose, an' I reckon the honly bloke as don't 'ave 'is daily grumble is old Neville 'isself.

"Secondly, gennlemen, there's the matter of these 'ere white 'ats or bonnets as you've been give to wear with your hoveralls. I notice some of you is reluctant to wear 'em. As I said before, they appears to me to be somewhat ludicious—though I see Mr. Mooney 'as found a use for 'is own 'at by makin' it a spectacle for cigarettes an' such. But as Shakespeare says, gennlemen, speakin' o' Nelson, 'England expeks that hevery man will do 'is duty.' An' if England decides as 'ow you can't do your duty without wearin' a funny 'at, you just got to grin an' wear it.

"After these 'ere few words, gennlemen, I 'ope I got no need to mention my final hitem. I 'ope the hidea o' Dizzerplin 'as sunk in good an' proper. But I will just mention—leavin' the hissue to your sense o' Dizzerplin—as no less than nine of you 'ave not yet hentered for the Great Baconfold A.F.S. Snooker 'Andicap.

"Squad—dis-MISS!"



*"I must go down to the sea again,  
To the lonely sea and the sky."*

## The Domestic Shelter

*"Mon Repos,"  
Passchendaele Avenue,  
Hyde.  
Wednesday.*

**M**Y Dear Claude,—You must come back at once. The A.R.P. shelter has come. It is useless to say that the audit in Glasgow will take a fortnight—suppose

a war starts this week-end? I should look such an idiot with the shelter lying in pieces on the lawn.

I must say I don't care very much for its appearance. There is something about corrugated iron that is definitely repellent. And the colour! So very crude and non-rustic, and the garden seat was painted that delightful shade of Nile green only last spring. It is too bad, really. Why not offer a choice of shades as all the best people do? It seems typical of the whole business. But I suppose it does not matter so much if it is to be buried.

It's the burying part of it I think so ridiculous. I mean on ground level one can find some practical uses for the wretched object. After all, Fräulein's cycle must go somewhere. And there is your Mr. Middleton Gardening Outfit which really should not stay in the larder any longer. Muriel declares the things are absolutely perfect for growing mushrooms, but how can one tell that a mushroom will grow inside? Judging by the minute quantity one ever found however early one got up, I have always believed that the wretched things were actuated purely by caprice. Then of course there is the garden roller, your tools and bench from the garage (did I tell you that the bench is a little shaky now? I accidentally touched it when putting the car away. You've no idea the jolt it gave me—out of all proportion—my chin was quite sore for hours after), and I really do think that we can't leave your skis under the bed any longer. They do so get in the way of my hat-boxes.

Of course there is a certain logic about the Government. I was reading the circulars we got last September, and do you know we quite forgot to clear the attic of all inflammable materials? Now we have just the place to put them.

Then we mustn't overlook the other things that must be there. Do you think it would be a good plan to keep a small refrigerator in it? An electric one of course, for I realise that we might not have gas. I saw such a nice one in the showrooms yesterday—only two-and-six a week for twenty-one years. I'm sure the place would get awfully stuffy in summer. We could keep one corner free from the mushrooms. I wonder if the old car-battery would drive it? One must think of these practical details. We must try to hang as many things on the walls as possible—Mother tells me she is knitting the dinkiest gas-mask containers for all her friends, but—oh, I forgot. Can you drive a nail into the



*"Have no fears for my safety, Excellency—my personal bodyguard have orders to mix unobtrusively with the crowd."*

corrugated stuff or will you need a man from the plumbers?

The real trouble is that I have no idea where we are going to put the thing. I suppose there is room by the lily-pond, but wouldn't that make it rather damp in winter? Obviously we can't interfere with the tennis court—there is hardly enough run-back as it is. What about your rose garden? If we bury it deeply enough you could plant all the roses on top again and that would make it absolutely invisible from the air. I think that is best.

You see the kind of problems we have to face, so you must come back.

The children send their love and ask if you miss your golf on Sundays. I did not carry the conversation further.

Your loving wife,

PHYLLIS.

P.S.—Really the most infuriating thing has happened. I spoke to Mrs. Frap, and she said she was surprised to hear that we had our shelter because they were only being distributed at the moment to people with an income of less than £250 a year. I have sent the beastly thing back at once. You must take it up with the Inspector of Taxes. I never trusted him.

## Appeal to Biographers

["Germany's juridical position is too clear to be contested."  
From an article by Dr. Goebbels.]

SHOW me the place where Hitler gambolled,  
His chubby fists all filled with flowers,  
Point to the pathways where he scrambled  
And stained his breeks in happier hours—  
Or show me not. I shall not worry,  
His boyhood's escapades are dead;  
Perhaps some nursemaid in a hurry  
Dropped the poor child upon his head.

I shall not ask where General Goering,  
A punctual pupil, would arrive  
(Not like his playmates frail and erring)  
To learn how two and two make five:  
The bench may now be old and rotten  
Where once the awful airman sat,  
His class-room and his slates forgotten,  
He now does longer sums than that.

But since across the dykes and hedges—  
The truces that they gave us gone—  
Leaving a paper trail of pledges  
The leaders lead their warriors on  
And English dupes who heard their bellows  
And loved them, feel a trifle sore  
(Though I myself regard the fellows  
Precisely as I did before),

I like to let my wandering fancies  
Play round about the Goebbels boy  
And think what tales, what old romances  
His tutors taught him to enjoy,  
Who ever cribbed or stole the peaches,  
Who ever left the cat to drown,  
In his explanatory speeches  
He did not let the old firm down.

So "England cheats" says he "and blusters"  
Whenever Hitler breaks his oath;  
Of all the Aryan filibusters  
He is the one of lordliest growth.  
Oh, who has kept the porridge ladle  
That Goebbels' infant lips licked dry?  
Have they by any chance the cradle  
Where the young Goebbels used to lie?

EVOE.

## The Funny Side of It All

"WHAT a number of disadvantages there are in having a reputation for being amusing!" I said, with all that bitterness, gloom and profound pessimism that is so apt to characterise the private life of a humorous writer.

"You mean besides the main disadvantage of having to be amusing?" Laura asked.

I said that I did.

"Listen, Laura. You know that I've had flu?"

Laura assumed an expression of astonishment that would have been overdone if she'd been listening to the wireless and the Nine O'clock News had suddenly split an infinitive whilst dropping a couple of aitches.

"Know you've had flu?" she echoed. "Considering that I myself found the thermometer for you, and shook it and shook it for hours until we saw that it really *was* stuck, and kept on reminding you to take that foul cough-mixture, and told Miss Plum you were too ill to go through the Whist-Drive-and-Dance accounts, and then caught it myself . . ."

"Well, I shook the thermometer for *you*, and gave you the last bottle of the cough-mixture, and told Mrs. Battlegate that you weren't really fit to be read aloud to. But never mind that. When *you* had flu people were sorry for you. When I had it Cousin Florence wrote and said that she had no doubt we should soon be reading some amusing little sketch about influenza. Even Charles asked whether there wasn't some fun to be got out of post-influenza depression."

"His or yours?"

"And Miss Littlemug most kindly left some oranges and a copy of a paper about atrocities, and wrote on a card that she was quite sure I was seeing the *funny* side of it all."

"I don't seem to remember that you were a bit," Laura said thoughtfully. "Or did she mean the atrocities?"

"Whatever she meant, she was wrong. And it's exactly the same thing whatever happens."

"You mean Miss Littlemug is always wrong?"

"No, I don't. Or rather, yes I do."

"I quite understand," Laura said, with an unnaturally intelligent expression. "You make it all so beautifully clear."

"Miss Littlemug," I said very distinctly, "is practically always wrong, but I wasn't at that moment talking about her. I was just telling you that *whatever* happens people always think I'm going to be amusing about it."

"They don't know you as well as I do," Laura replied—reminding me a good deal of a snake in the grass.

"When I crossed to the Isle of Man and was seasick for four hours straight on end you wouldn't believe the number of people who said that they supposed that everything of that kind was just copy for me."

"And was it?"

"No," I said rather curtly. "It's been done too often. In any case that isn't the point. The point is that everybody—"

"Don't bother to say it again. I quite understood the first time."

"Even Aunt Emma, when she wrote and asked me to find her a thoroughly experienced single-handed cook, fond of the country, low wages, long references, and an early riser, only said that she wouldn't apologise for troubling me as she knew everything was grist that came to my mill and I should no doubt get quite a lot of amusement out of it all."

"And did you get a cook out of it all as well?"

There seemed no point in replying to so rhetorical a question, and I merely turned to the writing-desk.

Any amount of material for humour lay there, just awaiting my attention.

A statement from my bank, and a letter about the children being in quarantine for mumps, and a very difficult and delicate question about the Vice-Presidency of the Women's Institute, and any number of bills . . .

Ha-ha-ha!

F. M. D.

"Plans for over 23 miles of new by-pass roads on the London-Holyhead and London-Carlisle trunk roads have been prepared by the Ministry of Transport at a cost of over £2,000,000."

Staffordshire Paper.

Couldn't they use cheaper ink?



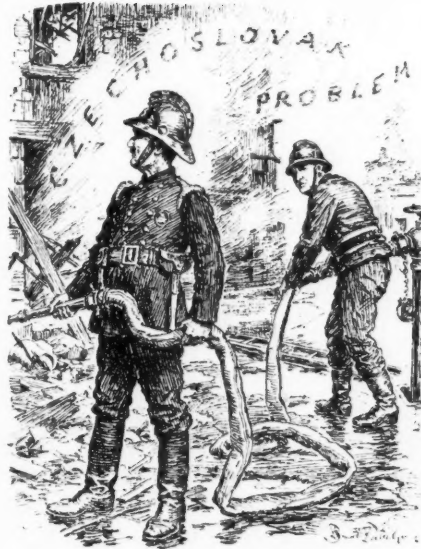
May 18 1938



**WHOSE TURN NEXT?**

*Dame Europa.* "The Goblins will get you if you don't watch out!"

June 1 1938



**G. R. P.**

*The Prime Minister (to M. Daladier).* "We'd best stand by for a bit—you can never be sure that it won't start again."

September 28 1938



**LITTLE CZECH RIDING-HOOD**

"What sharp teeth you have, Grandmamma!"  
"All the better for peacefully revising treaties, my dear."

October 5 1938



**PEACE IN ARMS**

**TIME MARCHES ON**



**M**OTIONLESS in the middle of the dense patch of jungle called 'Nakwalakuna which surrounds the only water-hole in the Great Plain stood 'Njeffri the Giraffe, silently chewing the cud and contemplating the empty sky. Of all the People of the Great Plain 'Njeffri alone could perform this feat. No other neck was long enough to penetrate the canopy of tangled foliage which shut out the sky from all other living things, except of course 'Nmamaduk the Marmoset and 'Mperssi the Parakeet, who hardly played fair.

Even for a Great Belted Giraffe of Africa 'Njeffri was a truly magnificent specimen. His massive head was resting in the topmost fork of a eucalyptus-tree (for he had a nasty cold), and as the cud flowed up the right side of his neck and down the left side, muscles of tempered steel rippled rhythmically under the velvet skin and urged the cud to flow faster, faster.

'Njeffri was undisputed Lord of the 'Nakwalakuna water-hole. The Lesser People of the Plain, such as 'Narchi the Antelope, 'Mwalta the Warthog and 'Nderik the Duiker, prowled round its outskirts from dawn to dusk, sometimes pausing to peer enviously into the cool shadows of the sanctuary and mutter, "What a neck!" But not until six P.M. did anyone dare to enter. Each day at that time, when the tropic night swooped suddenly down upon the Great Plain the Lesser People would troop silently to the water of 'Nakwalakuna and begin to slake their thirst. For four hours 'Njeffri with kingly forbearance would suffer them to drink

their fill; but upon the stroke of ten he would heave his head into heaven and honk, "'Ntime, 'Ngentlemen, 'Nplease," whereupon all the Lesser People would obediently scutter out into the open plain. The Law was unchallenged, the honk of dismissal invariably obeyed.

Thus 'Njeffri, the Giver of the Law.

But to-day, after years of serene suzerainty, 'Njeffri felt a premonition of approaching trouble. Something strange and disturbing seemed to be in the air. He hoisted his head a couple of yards above the eucalyptus-tree and delicately distended his sensitive nostrils in a suspicious sniff. The lambent fire kindled in his pale green eyes as they swivelled from north to south, from east to west. The Great Plain was silent, deserted, changeless. 'Njeffri petulantly bit the cabbage out of the top of a palm-tree and settled down once more to cure his cold.

Suddenly his knife-keen nostrils twitched again. This time there was no mistake. All the inherited instinct of generations of giraffes whispered that the hour of his destiny was at hand. Hardly knowing, save with a dim ancestral consciousness, what to expect, he again raised his head above the tree-tops and peered anxiously round the horizon. A-ah! Half-sigh, half-honk, the pent-up breath escaped from his silken lips as his eyes discerned a small cloud of white dust that seemed to be rapidly approaching. Now at last he knew. It was coming, coming, coming. Ordained since the beginning of time, by primeval decree predestined and inevitable, combat to the death was upon



"What a neck!"

him. And he had a cold! "Nkismetshoo!" Biting off another palm-cabbage for luck, he lowered his head to within ten feet of the ground and strode towards the edge of the jungle.

Lollop-lop, lollop-lop, lollop-lop, twelve feet at a stride, head in air and eyes red with the light of battle, 'Mosbert the Ostrich came like a whirlwind across the Great Plain.

Executing a neat Christie the great bird pulled up short within a few yards of the spot where 'Njeffri, his legs firmly straddled and his neck arched in anger, stood guard on the edge of the 'Nakwalakuna. For a moment the two hereditary enemies confronted each other in a tense silence. Even for a Great Vested Ostrich of Africa 'Mosbert was a truly magnificent specimen. It was only his superb white featherage that concealed the fact that his muscles too (unlike 'Njeffri's, they were of whipcord instead of tempered steel) rippled beneath his silken goosesh. From threatening beak to powerful withers the hackles of his neck uprose in anger and the proud panache of his glorious tail waved defiantly in the sultry air.



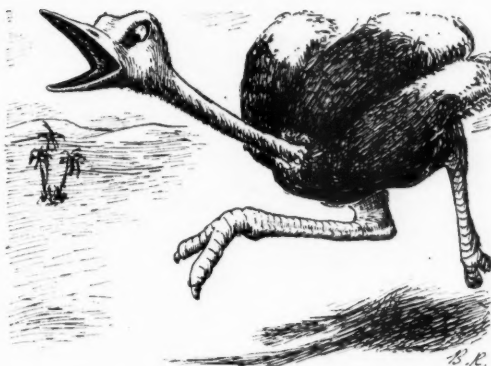
"Threetotoo against Battling Bertie!"

with one piercing beady eye and uttered his hoarse and cackling challenge: "I 'ngwant some 'ngwater!"

'Njeffri flung the challenge back into the big bird's teeth: "Oh 'ngyeah?" he honked derisively.

One by one the Lesser People of the Plain were creeping near to see what would happen. All preserved an awed silence except 'Mperssi the Parakeet, who hopped about excitedly on a mango branch and screeched incessantly: "Threetotoo, threetotoo, threetotoo against Battling Bertie!"

'Mosbert released 'Njeffri from the hypnotic stare of his right eye and with a quick turn of his head picked him up with the equally hypnotic glare of his left eye. It was an old and well-tried ruse that had won the big ostrich many a battle almost before seconds were out. 'Njeffri blinked uncertainly, and with a white flurry of feathers and a deafening war-cackle 'Mosbert dived



"'Mosbert the Ostrich came like a whirlwind across the Great Plain."

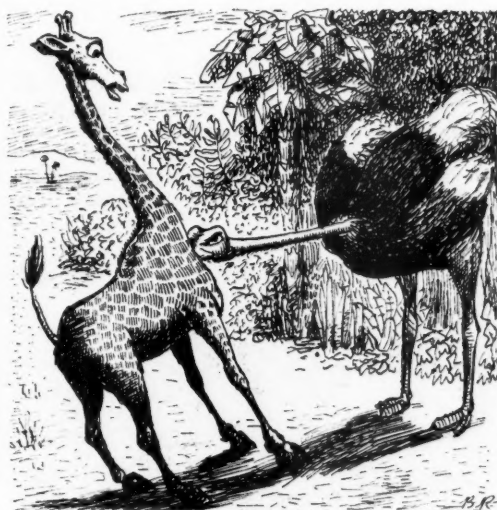
extorted symbol of surrender.

The outraged ostrich withdrew his beak from 'Njeffri's velvet chest and, craning his neck with superb cunning, regarded with one indignant eye the damage which had been inflicted upon his stern and with the other the missing plumes which mocked him from on high. Then, as if overcome by shame, he emitted a hollow cackle and drove his head and eighteen inches of neck firmly into the churned-up earth. Gradually the subterranean cackling ceased and the two great beasts, motionless save for their heaving flanks, sought inspiration—the one from heaven, the other from earth, each after the manner of his kind.



"He sneezed!"

It was 'Njeffri who made the next move. Depositing his trophies in the top of a coconut-palm he approached 'Mosbert warily from the rear and, keeping him safely at neck's-length, began to pluck the remaining plumes out of the big bird's tail. Save for an occasional convulsive waggle of his stern the ostrich might well have been asleep. At last only one solitary plume remained, a pathetic witness of the glory that had been. 'Njeffri was just about to deal with this when a bit of floating down was wafted by chance into one of his quivering nostrils. Immediately his neck arched and recoiled and slowly straightened into vertical rigidity; the muscles of tempered steel rippled rapidly and uncontrollably; the great jaws gaped and the silken lips receded tautly over the ivory



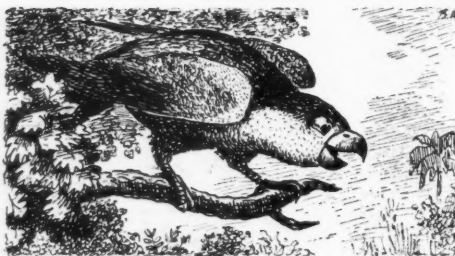
"'Mosbert dived forward and drove his pitiless beak into the giraffe's unprotected chest."



teeth; the soft muzzle wrinkled into a hundred creases. He sneezed! Again and again he sneezed until the tears coursed rapidly down his cheeks, almost extinguishing the smouldering fire in his pale green eyes.

With a pop like a champagne cork and a hiss of intaken breath and sand in a flash and a flurry of white fury 'Mosbert the Ostrich was up and round and into him. Like wrought-iron flails the great spurred legs hacked and ripped the spotted velvet skin. The agate beak stabbed and tore. Relentlessly, ruthlessly the solitary plume sought for 'Njeffri's vulnerable nostril. Torn, bleeding and tickled almost to death, the great giraffe sank to his knees, honking piteously.

Up in the mango-tree 'Mperssi the Parakeet changed his

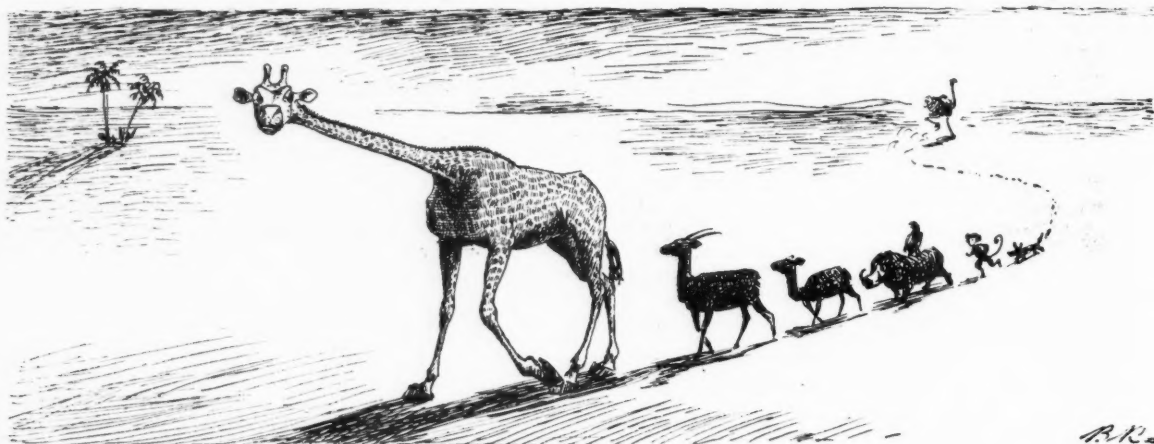


"Threetotoo against 'Njittery 'Njeffri!"

cision plucked out 'Mosbert's one remaining plume and placed it deliberately in the coconut-tree with the others.

With a piercing cluck of rage and mortification the ostrich curved his neck and inspected his ravished stern. It was more than he could bear. Turning what was left of tail he fled precipitately. Lollopy-limp, lollopy-limp, lollopy-limp over the plain in a diminishing cloud of dust went 'Mosbert the Ostrich, his plaintive cackles fading slowly into silence.

Over the western horizon, with 'Mosbert the Vested Ostrich, sank also the setting sun. Sore and weary, but with head held high, 'Njeffri walked slowly back into the 'Nakwalakuna, followed, since it was the hour permitted by the Law, by all the



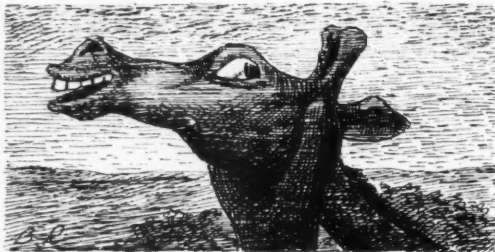
"'Njeffri walked slowly back into the 'Nakwalakuna."

tune: "Threetotoo," he screeched, "threetotoo, threetotoo against 'Njittery 'Njeffri!"

'Njeffri heard. Above the pounding in his temples and the triumphant cackling of the white and whirling tornado that was battering him into unconsciousness the barbed insult sank home. With a supergiraffe effort he staggered to his feet and undid the knots in his neck. He sneezed violently once more and suddenly his brain cleared. The blood of countless camelopards again coursed hotly in his veins. The fire rekindled in his pale green eyes and his neck muscles rrippled merrily. 'Mosbert paused in his furious onslaught and cocked an astonished eye at his risen foe. It was his undoing. Like a bolt from the blue the head of the great giraffe swooped down again and with merciless pre-

Lesser People of the Plain. Long and deeply the giraffe drank of the cool water, and then with a sigh of satisfaction he returned to the eucalyptus-tree and rested his head in its topmost fork, inhaling gratefully the healing fragrance of its leaves.

The Law, the unalterable Law of the 'Nakwalakuna, had been vindicated; the Giver of the Law had fulfilled his high destiny. A thought struck him. The Law was strong and absolute and eternal, but it was also generous, with the magnanimity of all Big Things. 'Njeffri raised his head a couple of yards above the tree-tops and honked for all to hear, to wonder and to acclaim: "'Ntonight there will be an 'Ngextension of 'Mhours until 'Ngeleven o'clock. 'Ngood-night, Little 'Kpeople, 'Ngood-night."



"'Ngood-night, Little 'Kpeople, 'Ngood-night."





*"Avast heavin' there, boy, and starboard your helm!"*



PRIMAVERA . . .



... PASSES BY.



*"The other toast-rack is over there—with a moustache."*





*"But remember, the more business improves now, the further it will have to fall when the next crash comes."*

## Daffodil Day

**S**OFTLY WE LAID THEM IN A DEDICATED PLOT  
BESIDE THE WEEPING WILLOW AND THE MOANING  
FIR,  
ON BEDS OF MOULDERED LEAVES WITH BITS OF BROKEN POT,  
SIR WATKIN, PHENIX, CYNOSURE AND GOLDEN SPUR;  
A THOUSAND BULBS—A BARGAIN—FIVE POUNDS TO CLEAR  
THE LOT.

DEPRESSION BY DEPRESSION, WINTER SQUALLED AND BLEW,  
BUT IN THE CALM SECLUSION OF THE MOSSY FLOOR,  
WHILE I HAD RAGING INCOME-TAX AND YOU HAD FLU,  
RED BEACON, PRINCEPS, CAMPERNELLE AND EMPEROR.  
AS CRISIS FOLLOWED CRISIS, STRAINED AND HEAVED AND  
GREW.

The daffodil people rush out of the dark,  
Every hand holds a spear, every spear takes a spark,  
The spark leaps to flame and a challenge is hurled  
With fanfares of trumpets, corollas unfurled,  
To sweep dusty Boredom the round of the world.

A rabble of thrushes runs shouting beside  
And a medley of petal-folk follows their ride;

The gold of new sunshine, fire-hot from the Mint,  
Lies thick on their breast-plates—their helms hold the  
glint;

They sing as they come and they come at a sprint.

PRINCEPS, PHENIX, GOLDEN SPUR,  
GOLDEN SCEPTRE, LUCIFER.

Sir Boredom is portly and purse and pale,  
And he lurks all the winter in offices stale  
With audits and statements and fumes of finance  
Till the swashbuckler people with sunbeams a-dance  
Come to chivy him out at the point of the lance.

Spring or no Spring, they say, Boredom comes back,  
And daffodil-gold is no cure for the lack  
Of the dingier dollars; yet once in a way  
It is well to despise such old heathenry—say  
From morning to evening on Daffodil Day.

BUD AND SHEATH AND LEAF AND STEM,  
SPRING AND FAIRIES JOINED IN THEM—  
EMPRESS, FIREBRAND, SOUTHERN GEM.

## Homer at Hammer-smith

(Translated by Professor Haddock)

### II.

NOW when the long boats were brought out from the well-roofed houses all the people of the city were gathered on the banks of the river, this way and that divided in their minds. And as in the cool hives there is a continual murmur and hum of bees before the choosing of the queen, so murmured the citizens beside the water. The young women favoured the sons of Cambridge because of their bright hair and the pale blue colour of their oars and neck-cloths. But the well-beered citizens who trafficked in wagers on the race whispered "Oxford" behind the backs of their hands, for the sons of Oxford were more robust and weighty; and the old men leaning over the railings and smoking their short pipes said one to another, "Verily, wherever there are two men contesting together with the oar, or with the bow, or with their swift feet circling the well-dusted arena, he that is good and big shall be the gainer always and he that is good and small shall take the second place."

And the cow-eyed goddess Athene heard the old men and was glad; but she said to her jealous heart, "All the same, it would not surprise me greatly if Aphrodite were up to some dirty trick or other. Would that the well-shaped daughter of Zeus had spent but a short time at a good public school, that she might understand the decent customs of sport!" So spake Athene and descended to the towpath in the likeness of a cloud of young virgins; and they crowded the towpath, gazing at the men of Cambridge with soft eyes, seeking to subdue them, and saying, "Wherefore, O young men, do you go upon the waters and undertake great journeys in the small boat to Mortlake, when here we are at Putney to delight you?"

But the men of Cambridge gave no heed to the girls, carrying their strong oars down the steep-sloping bank.

Now the tide rose lazily, for it was the time of neaps; but the wind blew freshly from the south-west and made high waves by the farther shore. And when the boats were started the men of Cambridge went before, having the smoother water on the southern shore, and two more inches of movement at the slides as Aphrodite had com-



"... and remember, dear, for cases of emergency the number is 999."

manded. They rowed forty-and-one strokes in the first minute and thirty-seven in the second; and the beat of their oars was strong and steady, like the beating of an eagle's wings.

Troubled then was the heart of the cattle-eyed goddess Athene, and, taking the likeness of a seagull, she flew down and hovered above Bourne the son of Bourne the son of Bourne, the stroke of Oxford, and she upbraided him with bitter words.

"O seagull," replied the labouring oarsman, "it is well enough for thee forsooth, poised on strong pinions in the empty air, to recommend more swiftness. But we are in a frail and shallow vessel, wholly unsuited to these angry waters, through which with quite inadequate instruments we are in fact propelling her by no means discredibly. It were better, O seagull, as it seems to me at least, if thou didst keep thy reproaches for the goddess Athene who did not see to it that we won the toss. But think not that we are dispirited. Give her ten, O coxswain."

So spake he, and the cow-eyed goddess departed to Olympus, bewailing the ingratitude of mortals.

Now Massey the invisible coxswain gave her ten, and afterwards ten more; and the boats passed under the Bridge together: and, the river bending thereafter, the men of Cambridge came into rough water also, and the riggers dipped in the tops of the waves and

great was the splashing of the oars, and the strength of the sons of Oxford prevailed, and they went ahead.

Then Burrough, the President of Cambridge, uttered supplication in this wise to the goddess Aphrodite: "O discriminating daughter of Zeus, who dost love Cambridge best, far indeed be it from me to ask unnatural or undeserved advantages, for such is not the way of sportsmen; and yet my crew is hard put to it by the waves, and I perceive that seven is rowing short, and already, glancing over my shoulder, I can scarce detect the well-varnished and fast-departing rudder of Oxford; so what about it?"

And Aphrodite, sitting on the wide knees of Zeus, said, "Look down, Maker of Lightning; for behold it is the Boat Race, and Oxford are leading."

Then said the divine provider of thunder, "To tell you the truth, I have never taken much interest in that event, where no women are engaged at all. But still I understand your feminine taste for Cambridge; and I tell you what—the simplest thing surely is to tamper with the Oxford coxswain. For, though the oarsmen boast of their strength, what are they without the small person who holds the strings of direction and guides the vessel this way and that?"

So spake he, and Aphrodite descended to earth, taking the shape of two small flies: and in this guise she entered the two eyes of Massey, the Oxford coxswain, so that he could see nothing, and the tears wetted his cheeks. Now they were approaching the island called Chiswick Eyot. And presently Bourne the son of Bourne the son of Bourne spoke thus: "O coxswain, to each man is his task, and it is for each man to apply himself to his own. But it seems to me as I look sidelong over my oar that we are passing erratically between Chiswick Eyot and the mainland. Never did my father, nor his father before him, follow such a course in their well-fitted and triumphant craft. It is in my heart and mind that we are going a long way round; and it would be interesting to know what you are up to."

And Massey the coxswain answered: "The wind blows strongly from the south-west, O Bourne, and things may well be as thou hast reported; but I have not one fly in my eye but two; and who can say where we are? Not I."

Then said Bourne, "Verily, this is a singular misfortune; for I cannot take my hand from the oar to assist you;

but such is the way of life among mortals."

And Athene, perceiving the plight of the Oxford men, repented of her wrath. And she flew down a second time in the likeness of a seagull, and plucked the two flies from the two eyes of Massey the coxswain so that he saw clearly again, and steered the vessel into the main channel beyond the island. But now were Cambridge thirty and seven lengths ahead.

And Athene in her heart was troubled and said unto Zeus the cloud-collector: "Surely now in concert with Poseidon the Sea god, the son of Cronos, thou wilt raise a great tempest that the men of Cambridge may sink ingloriously before Barnes Bridge?"

"But what would be the use of that?" said the sagacious Father of gods and men, "for Oxford would sink as well. Besides, I am not at all sure that my brother Poseidon has any jurisdiction in these waters."

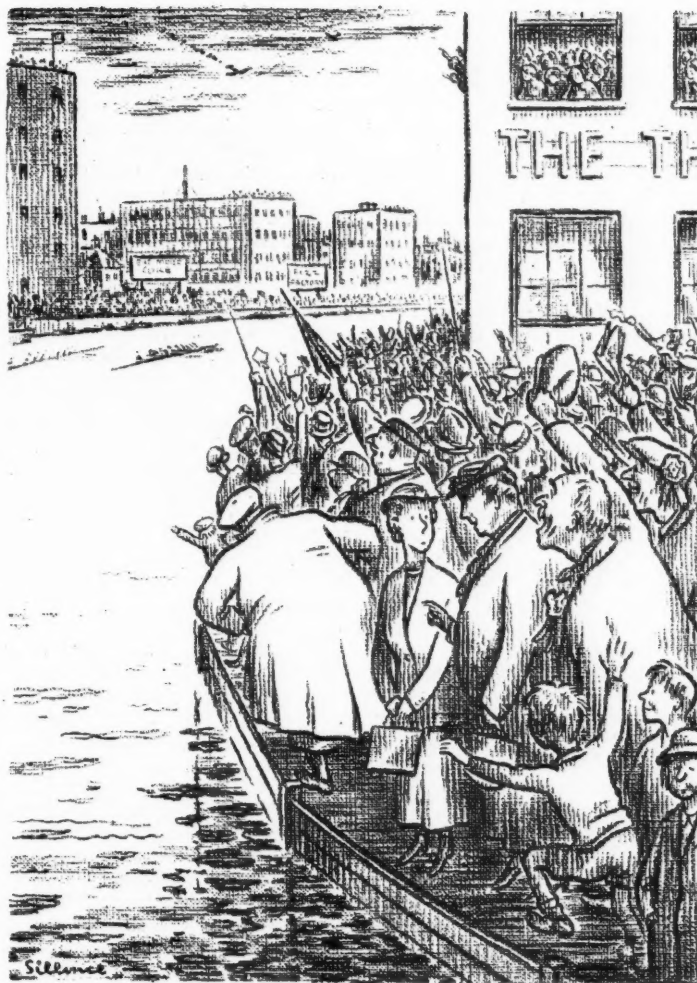
"They are tidal," said the well-informed goddess.

"That may be," replied the organiser of thunder. "But I have a better plan. Between Cambridge and the winning-post there are still four public-houses, if I remember rightly, all on the Surrey shore. There are the 'Bull' and the 'Watermen's Arms,' there is the 'White Hart' beyond the bridge, and the 'Queen's Head' also. Surely by now the men of Cambridge are tired and thirsty and could be persuaded by a maiden of suitable colouring and dimensions to pause and refresh themselves with golden beer?"

"There are some devices," answered the indignant goddess, "too base for a sporting event of this kind, even where the ruthless gods are engaged."

"It seems a little pedantic," said the master of sky-sounds, "but I see the point. Listen, then. Far off near the finish I perceive the Senior Burgess for Oxford University, sitting with his excellent wife and family in his fine boat, which is shaped like a dolphin. For this year, the Senior Burgess and his lady are not giving their accustomed party at the half-way point, but are determined to behold the finish of the race; and if their friends nevertheless arrive at their well-painted home expecting sandwiches and tankards, then will these be reminded that it is the Day of All Fools. Here then, surely, is the way of mischief open."

So spake the cloud-collecting ruler of Olympus, and he sent down Hermes the Messenger of Gods in the likeness of a reasonably respected constituent



"Well, I've heard they're going to Mortlake for some purpose or other."

to hold the Senior Burgess for Oxford University in converse. And while they talked together, the goddess Athene, in the shape of a seagull, cast off the mooring ropes of the round-bellied boat, so that she drifted slowly across the course; and Athene put jam in the carburettors of the engines, so that they would not start. And the boat of Cambridge, coming on victorious towards the winning-post, collided with the ample boat of the Senior Burgess for Oxford University, and sank. And thus were the men of Oxford victorious a third time.

A. P. H.

#### Here's How

"The Scherzo is a remarkable movement. It's time signature of a quick one in a bar . . ."—*Music programme notes.*

#### Cynicism in High Places

"Officials agreed, however, that some unforeseen 'incident' could conceivably start a general conflagration although they were of the opinion that European leaders are endeavouring to avoid rather than to encourage incidents.—(U.P.)"

"The Sacred College of Cardinals grin's.—(U.P.)"—*Argentine Paper.*



## Letters to Officialdom

XXXI.—Re Litter

To the General Secretary, The Council  
for the Preservation of Rural England,  
4, Hobart Place, London, S.W.1.

DEAR SIR,—With the coming of spring and the week-end migration of picnickers into the countryside, may I suggest that greater tolerance be shown towards those who leave behind them broken bottles, empty tins and litter on the ground? It is the fashion nowadays to condemn these people out of hand instead of trying to understand their motives.

After all no one acts without a motive, and the obvious explanation of an act is by no means always the true explanation of it. (This is not an original remark of my own. Pietro Como said it when dining with the Borgias. "What are you doing to my wine?" asked Pietro suspiciously. "Removing a piece of cork," replied Cæsare Borgia. "Cork my foot!" retorted Pietro. "You're trying to poison me!" He thereupon refused every wine offered him and as a result felt thoroughly peevish the whole evening. When he learned later that Cæsare had truly been taking cork out of his wine he said: "H'mph! Shows the obvious explanation is by no means always the true explanation!" But when he next asked the Borgias to dinner in his own villa they mischievously mixed arsenic with his health salts and he didn't sleep a wink the whole night.)

However, this is by the way. Let me now illustrate the remark which prompted this digression. If a man throws away a broken bottle on a beach the obvious explanation is that he wants to get rid of it. But what is the true explanation? Analyse the act and apply Freudian reasoning. The man does not want the bottle. Why? Because it is empty. Why should he not want it just because it is empty? Explanation No. 1: He has inherited from his father (or mother) a chronic disinterest in bottles once they are empty. Explanation No. 2: He is by profession a bottle-washer and hates the very sight of bottles. Explanation No. 3: He has horny feet and suffers from the delusion that everyone has horny feet, particularly children.

You see? A little understanding, a little toleration, and the reason for the man's behaviour stands out as plain as a pikestaff or (to coin a phrase) as

plain as picnic-refuse. The proper thing to do next is to approach the man, introduce oneself and say kindly: "Now tell me all about your father," or "Just to settle an argument between my wife and myself, have you or haven't you horny feet?" If he looks blank at these questions he is almost certain to be a bottle-washer, so one can engage him in conversation on the subject. Treatment of this sort will work wonders. (A good line is to tell him that broken bottles are the souls of fairies and every time they are trodden on a fairy dies.)

Last week I had rather a droll experience in Rumborough Forest, which is a popular beauty-spot. I came upon a middle-aged lady and gentleman eating oranges and throwing the peel all over a woodland path. Item, they had picked every primrose for about fifty yards in every direction except for the small clump on which they were sitting.

My first instinct, I regret to say, was to hit them on the head with a piece of timber. But I stayed my hand. I remembered Freud. I asked myself what they could possibly want so many flowers for. Had the gentleman discovered that, by sitting on and crushing them, primroses exuded some exotic perfume? Was that why he had married such a massive woman, so that she could go about with him at week-ends sitting on primroses to test their aromatic emanations? A perfumery manufacturer perhaps? For obviously, judging by the amount of flowers he had picked, he owned a factory of some sort.

And why were they throwing orange-peel about? Did they wish to dispose of it? No; there was a litter-basket within four yards of them. Then the explanation came to me in a flash. They were distributing it, out of the goodness of their hearts, for the birds.

At this moment the gentleman threw an empty salmon-tin over his shoulder and nearly hit me. But I was able to gauge his reason for this act without much trouble. They were animal-lovers and the salmon was for stray cats. I must say I should never have thought of doing this. It just shows how much one can learn by trying to understand.

Suddenly I realised their mistake. If the cats came along when the birds came down, the birds would be killed by the cats. So I immediately picked

up the tin, went forward and handed it to the gentleman. "It was a very kind thought," I said as gently as possible in order not to hurt his feelings, "but the birds will be in danger from the cats."

He affected to misunderstand me. "We bird-lovers," I added simply, "are a brotherhood. Heil Hitler!" (for as you know the man has an aviary).

But I don't think they liked my mentioning Hitler, although they looked the kind of people that would leap with joy at the name. Criminal faces they had, both of them. They just glared, got up and threw most of the primroses into the back of the car. Others they threw into the boot and the tool-box, and as they drove off they ran over the remaining ones that they had picked. But fifteen yards down the road they ran over a broken bottle and punctured all four tyres, and for a reason whose Freudian explanation eludes me I cheered loudly.

Now I have a plan for the treatment of all such people as these, and the plan is this. There should be established concentration-camps run on Freudian principles, and offending picnickers would be corralled in these camps and allowed to do precisely what they wished to do with picnicking impedimenta. In fact they would be urged on to do as they wished. Confirmed bottle-throwers would be given a limitless supply of bottles and encouraged to throw them at refuse-dumpers, tin-tossers and newspaper-scatterers. The refuse-dumpers in their turn would be encouraged to throw banana-skins and orange-peel under the feet of the bottle-throwers. The tin-tossers and newspaper-scatterers could devise a game of their own. Then the whole merry carnival would be whipped into a wild frenzy to the accompaniment of two hundred portable gramophones each playing a different tune. I cannot but think that a lot of good would come of this.

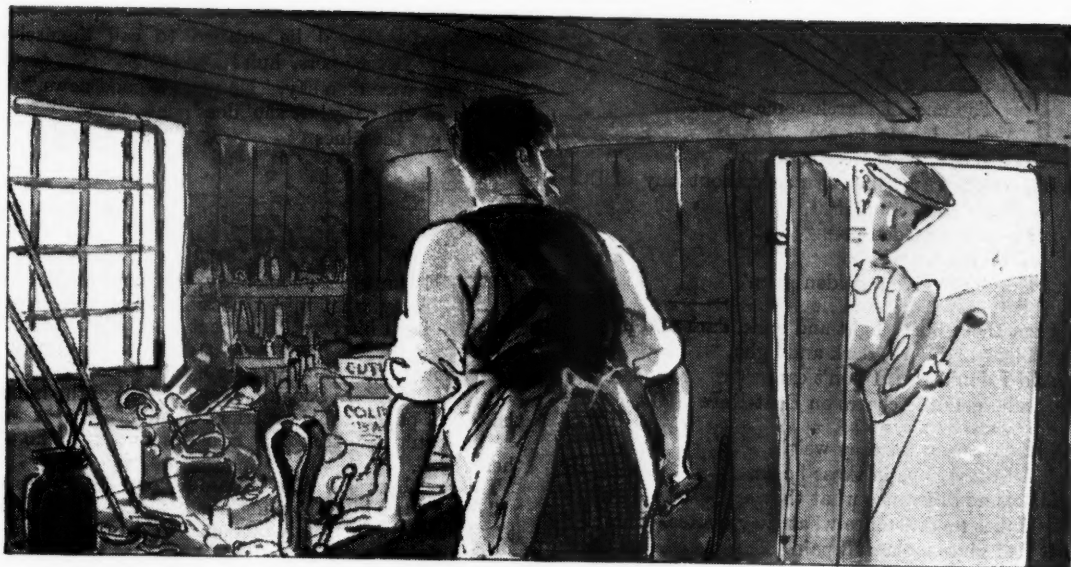
Yours faithfully,  
CHAS. CURSETT.

P.S.—A tone of vulgarity should be allowed to predominate so that everyone would feel at home.

"We will bury your boat for cash."  
Advt. in Magazine.

In that case we won't pay.





*The Pro's Shop—*



*What will it become?*

## I Got those Putney-Mortlake Blues

I HATE to see  
The end of March come roun'.  
Yessir, I hate to see  
The end of March come aroun'.  
If I could buy a newspaper without any of this  
Boat-Race stuff in it.  
I'd give a golden poun'.  
Yes, brudder,  
I'd gladly give a golden poun'.

I got those blues, light and dark, dark and light.  
Light and dark, dark and light,  
And I don't care, I don't care  
Who gets the cheers on Boat-Race Night.

I don't care what they weigh,  
All those boys in those boats.  
Makes no difference what they say,  
Makes no difference what they quotes.  
It just gives me a dull pain, boss,  
Just gives this old darky a pain.

I can't help wishin' dat man Sanders  
Done do somep'n about dis ribber  
And clean it up, honey, clean it right up  
And get rid of all dese boats.  
My, wouldn't dat be nice!  
Ribber, stay 'way fum mah door.  
You-all heah me?  
(Dese blues ain't rhyming no more,  
But who cares about dat?)

Old Man Ribber, he don't say nuffin'.  
Take a hint, papers, take a hint.  
All English papers, please copy.



"Would one of you care to make up a four for a game of cards?"

If the papers just naturally quit writing  
All this same old stuff every morning  
Maybe they'd be entitled to call themselves  
newspapers, huh?  
The wise men say, "No news is good news,"  
But oh, baby! it sho' does get tedious.  
I got the blues.

## Couldn't Say

"HE wants to see somebody," the youth said, brushing away what might possibly have been a cobweb from his ear. (He spent a lot of his time in the lumber-room.)

"I know that. Who does he want to see?"

"Says there Mr. Snoak," replied the youth, indicating the slip of paper in his superior's hand.

"He can't see him, Mr. Snoak's away. Who else is there?"

The youth pondered. "There's you," he suggested.

"I can't tell him anything about testimonials. What is it? Does he want to give us one?"

"Couldn't say."

"He doesn't look crazy, does he?"

"Not more'n most of 'em." The youth began to rub his right calf with the toe of his left shoe, over-balanced and stood in the wastepaper-basket.

"Oh, all right, send the blighter up. But give me a ring on this phone in five minutes, mind. And stop that infernal row."

The youth struggled out of the basket and went away.

Presently he returned with a thin man whom he allowed to enter the room and then shut the door on quickly. *Diminuendo* whistling was audible as he made for the lumber-room.

"Mr. Snoak?" said the thin man, beaming and walking forward with outstretched hand, like Royalty alighting from a car.

"No, my name's Churn. What can I do for you?"

The thin man said, "I've come to see the testimonials."

"Er—see them? What testimonials?"

The thin man pointed out an advertisement in the folded newspaper he was carrying. "There," he said. "It says, 'Originals may be seen on request.' I'd like to see *that* one."

Mr. Churn raised his eyebrows and said, "Sir, do you doubt our good faith?"

"Certainly I do," replied the thin man affably. "As a matter of course I doubt the good faith of any large firm." He put his spectacles on.

"But why ask for Snoak?"

"I've corresponded with Snoak. It was my idea to find out from him whether the testimonials really existed, and then, after discovering they didn't, to collect hush-money." He beamed. "But you'll do."

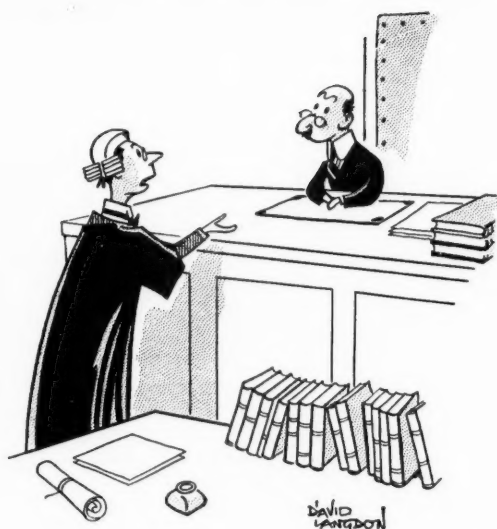
Mr. Churn's telephone rang. He took it up and said abstractedly, "What? Who? What? Who? Oh! Yes, I know, but I said five minutes—all right. No. No!" He hung up.

"Who was that?" asked the visitor chattily.

"Never mind," replied Mr. Churn, who felt justified in getting tough.

The thin man walked over to a filing-cabinet, pulled out a drawer and looked inside. "What would these be?" he inquired. "Faked invoices?"

"Did you ever hear of slander?"



*"Now when you say 'Thirty shillings or ten days,' and the defendant says 'Thirty shillings,' it's not your job to give him thirty shillings."*

"No witnesses," the thin man grinned.

Mr. Churn made for the door saying, "I'll get Sidney."

"Pooh," said the thin man, walking to another cabinet.

"Sidney wouldn't be any use to you. I've been asking him questions. Sidney would sink you."

Mr. Churn stared. "Asking him questions? Asking Sidney questions? You mean to say you got any answers?"

"Certainly."

"What—apart from 'Couldn't say'?" said Mr. Churn, his eyes starting out of his head. "Would you be so good as to outline your methods to me?"

"Come now, about this testimonial," said the thin man sternly, "make me an offer. I don't want much, just enough for a decent holiday. The spring put this into my head. I want to go to Holland before Hitler gets it."

"How about doing seven years for blackmail first?"

"Tush, man, your firm couldn't stand the case."

"That's what you think," said Mr. Churn, walking to the door. "Follow me."

"Where to? I warn you," the thin man put a hand in his pocket, "I am armed."

Mr. Churn opened the door. "Sidney! Sidney!"

Sidney appeared, brushing cobwebs from his ears.

"Sidney, where does Miss Clove keep the key of the testimonials?"

"Tain't locked," said Sidney. "But she won't half create if you muck 'em about." He withdrew.

Mr. Churn led the way to a small door at the end of the passage. "There you are," he said, flinging it open.

Rows and piles of stuffed sacks, solid as sailors' ditty-bags. The thin man regarded them and then said, "Bodies, I suppose? Sir, I shall sell my life dearly."

"Bodies my foot," Mr. Churn said. He opened one of the sacks and revealed a mass of letters.

The visitor seemed at last to be a little shaken. He

picked out a letter and began to read. "H'm," he said, putting it down and choosing another, which began, Mr. Churn could see, "Thrice-respected Sirs, I thank you . . ."

The thin man read several more, all fulsome, and grew steadily gloomier. Stirring the rest with one finger he said glumly, "All in different writings too. Well, I never would have believed it. You'd think people would have more self-respect. Downright *effusive*."

"That one in the advertisement," Mr. Churn said, "would probably be downstairs in the—"

"Never mind, never mind. My mistake. I suppose," said the thin man on his way out, "it'll have to be Margate this year as usual."

He left sadly, saying with a touch of irritation, "But if I were you I'd sack your office-boy."

Mr. Churn called Sidney from the lumber-room again and said, "What did you tell that fellow?"

"Couldn't say," Sidney replied. "Didn't pay much attention. I just said 'Yes' and 'No' where he seemed to expect it. I always do that. It makes 'em happy."

"Do you realise he was asking you if we were honest?"

"Ah?" Sidney said.

R. M.

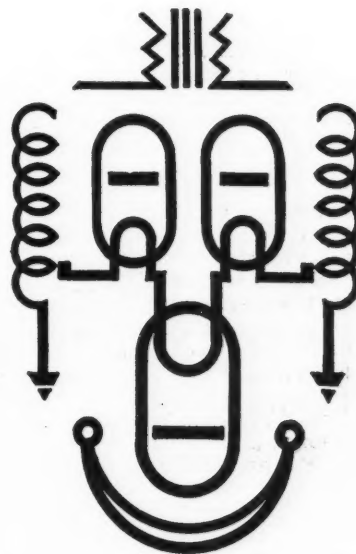
#### Commercial Candour

"We can safely say that there is no Repair Job necessary on a Car that cannot be executed more efficiently than by us."

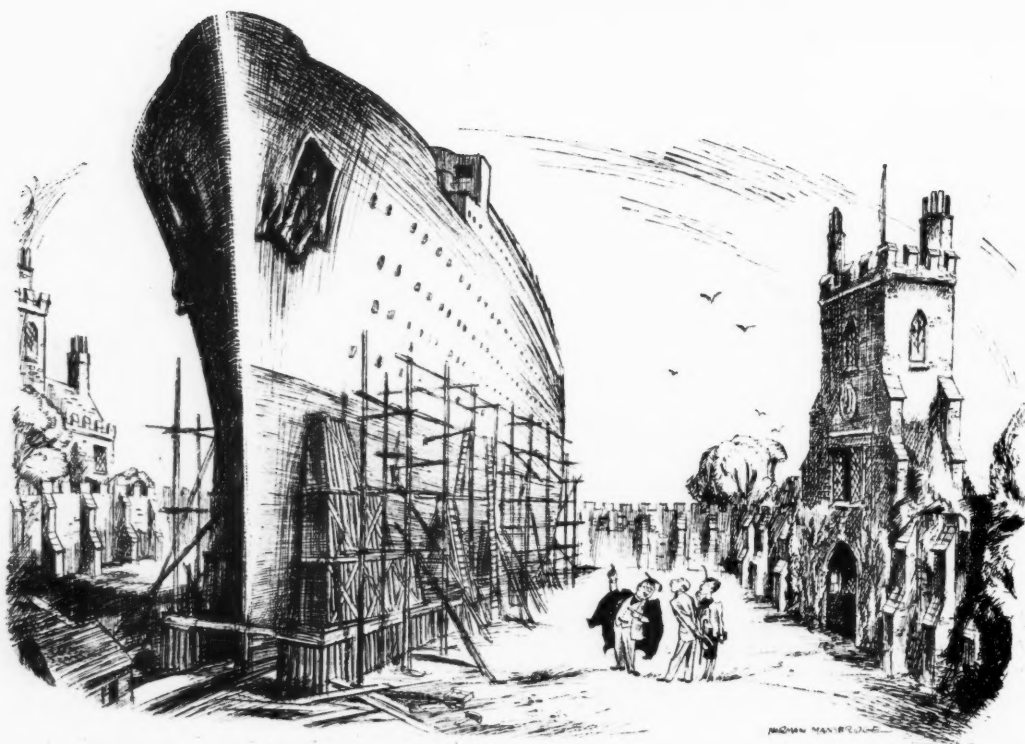
*Advt. in Rhodesian Paper.*

"Sir John Anderson . . . strongly emphasised the acceleration which had been applied to the Government's plans following the September crisis, and indicated that the resulting speeding-up was of such an order as would mean the realisation in the present year of aims formerly scheduled for 1914."—*Wanganui Chronicle*.

At this rate we ought to realise the 1939 schedule somewhere about 1964.



*Gran'ma listens-in*



*"Yes, the Junior Boys' Handicraft Class built it."*

## A Solar Myth

*It has been announced that the sunshine records of certain seaside resorts are open to suspicion.*

NOW once again we greet the Spring  
And all along the coast  
Our towns in emulation sing  
The myriad charms they boast,  
Announcing hardily, each one,  
That it gives place to well-nigh none  
In hours per annum of the sun.  
And wipes the eye of most.

Such figures the confiding soul  
Pent in his murky town  
Regards with glee and takes them whole  
In one good swallow down,  
Hoping to spend his summer ease  
On the warm sands of one of these,  
Developing by calm degrees  
A not uncomely brown.

"And we will join the tepid dip  
And on a sunlit sea  
Take, for a tranquil outing, ship,  
And gather prawns for tea,  
And all day long our lively brats  
Can plunge around without their hats;  
Duly considered, this or that's  
The very place for me."

But now a sound is in his ears  
That bids the dreamer wake,  
For these fair records, it appears,  
Are all too oft a fake  
Designed by local mayors and such  
To get him fairly in their clutch,  
And if they draw the line at much  
I make a great mistake.

To dally with the simple truth  
Repelled me as a lad,  
But to go on like this, forsooth,  
Is, I maintain, too bad,  
For whither can he now repair  
For ease of mind and change of air?  
If he can't trust a seaside mayor  
Who can he trust, by gad?

I hope that all may yet be well,  
And that the local powers  
May righteously and justly tell  
Their tale of sunlit hours,  
Lest he should find a new delight  
In rural scenes, and feast his sight  
On birds and woods and bullocks, quite  
Apart from sheep and flowers.      DUM-DUM.





ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON: THE SMOKE-SCREEN CLEARS.

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"Yes, Sir. Nero's fiddle. You will notice it's a bit charred at one end."

## The Old Gentleman

"If you was thinking of seeing the old gentleman," said Parker, "I should take it gently. 'E's got 'is war-'ead on this morning. Pacing up and down the dining-room ever since breakfast 'e's been, and won't 'ave 'is stick. It's this 'ere crisis what's done it. If you'd seen what 'e done to that pore cat what's 'is favourite just for a-clawing of 'is trousers according to routine for 'er bit of bacon-rind . . .

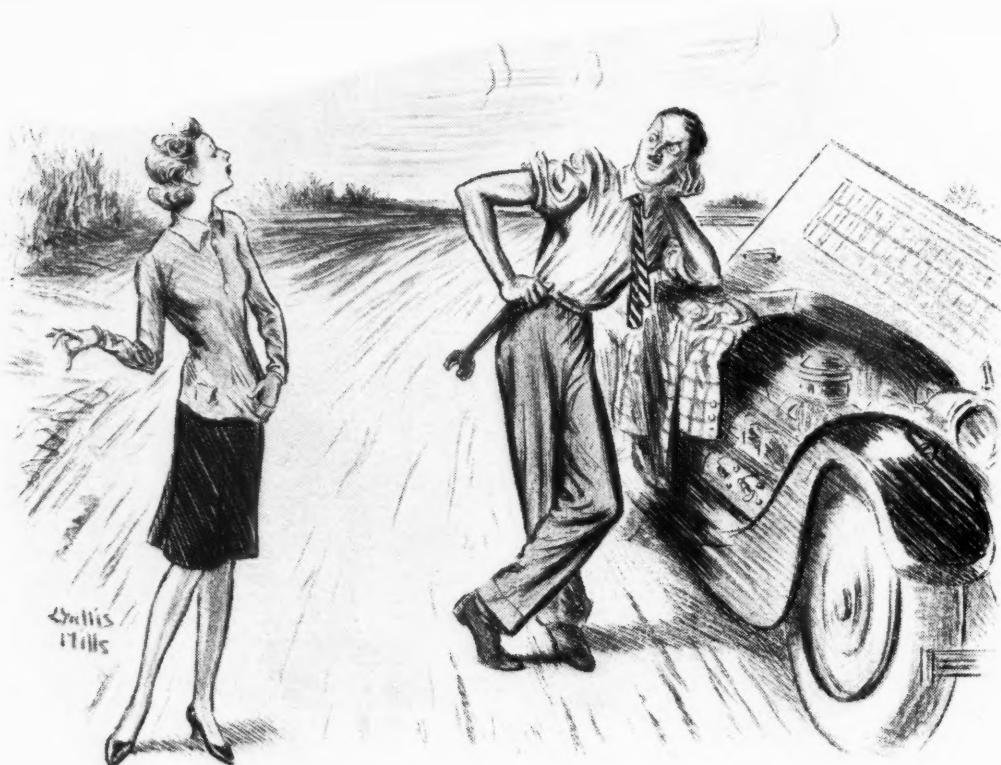
"You know, Sir, I ain't a superstitious man, never 'aving 'ad much time for the study of such, but I can't 'elp feeling that when 'e starts running blood it's a sign that there's trouble blowing up for the country. 'E was just the same before the last war. It was only a few years since we'd left the Service the first time, which 'ad 'appened sudden following a interview the old man 'ad with the Second Sea Lord. For a fortnight before the war 'e was 'aunting the Admiralty for a job. At last when mobilisation came

they couldn't stand it no longer and they gave 'im a ship. She wasn't hardly more than a lieutenant's command and 'orrible to look at, but 'e was as pleased as a lady with a new 'at.

"Starlight 'er name was, and some said that was what they built 'er by. She was a unlucky ship before she ever touched the water. She 'ad been designed as an experiment, but before they got 'alfway through they forgot what the experiment was about. Then Jacky Fisher quite unwitting made it worse by scribbling across the plans 'Gen. vi. 16' instead of 'Neh. vi. 16,' which 'e 'ad intended as a sort of general approval bringing in a back'and smack at Beresford. The constructors, reading it according to the inner meaning, as you 'ad to do at the Admiralty in them days, gave 'er another deck for luck, so that she was never 'appy at sea till she was 'eeled over thirty degrees.

"But to see the way the old man be'aved you'd 'ave thought they'd

given 'im the *Queen Elizabeth*. 'E tears down to the Dockyard where she's refitting and within 'alf-an-hour 'e's raising 'ell in the Admiral-Superintendent's office because they say she isn't ready for sea. At last 'e gets the Engineer-Captain what's in charge of refitting to come down personal and look at her. 'There,' says the old man when they gets down to the dockside, 'look at 'er. Engine repairs complete, bottom painting done—what more does she want?' 'I don't know,' says the Engineer-Captain, shaking 'is 'ead. 'There's something she needs to make 'er look right, but it escapes me. Maybe it's wheels. 'Owever, if I was to give you a nice big tarpaulin to go right over 'er and 'ide 'er beauty I don't see why you shouldn't take 'er out on a dark night.' 'What!' ses the old man, getting very 'ot. 'Are you a-sneering at my command? If it wasn't that you was technically my senior and me bound by the discipline of the Service I'd show you 'ow I



*"Don't know anything about engines? Thought you said you were in the Cavalry!"*

deal with talk like that from a 'alf-baked gibbering dockyard matey what doesn't know the difference between a ship and a light'ouse.' 'No,' ses the Engineer-Captain, 'it is 'ard sometimes, ain't it?' and they parted frigid, but the old man got 'is ship out all right that evening.

"Two or three nights later we was in action off the coast of Scotland. The old gentleman would 'ave it it was a enemy cruiser steaming fast in a southerly direction. She wouldn't take our signals and the old man argued that there couldn't be nothing merchant with that speed in them waters, so 'e put a shell across 'er bows and followed up with four or five more till she got out of sight. It wasn't till we got to Invergordon that we found out it was the 10.45 out of Arbroath. Fortunately 'e didn't 'it the train, and it was a quiet part of the coast so it was all 'ushed up, but 'e won't 'ave it spoke of to this day.

"'E's a nice old gentleman when you know 'im, but you couldn't say

'e was popular in the Service, account of 'is faithful way of speaking. I remember when we was in the Mediterranean we 'ad an R.N.V.R. Number One what 'ad been a yachtsman before the war. We was expecting a Greek Admiral of sorts on board one morning and the officers was all dressed up waiting when the Number One come on deck wearing a bunch of ribbons on 'is chest that weren't 'alf startling. The old man gives 'im one look and you could see 'im bottling 'isself up something cruel. At last 'e ses very quiet: 'Good morning, Mr. 'Emmings, I can see you be'ind them curtains. Excuse me mentioning it, but what 'ave you got that there ruddy pinafore on for?' Mr. 'Emmings draws 'isself up 'aughty and ses: 'This ain't no pinafore, Sir; these are the ribbons of the Order of Knight'ood of St. Matilda what I was awarded by the Servian Government for 'elping 'igh army officers to escape. I 'ad 'is Majesty's permission to accept it.' 'Oh,' ses the old man, 'well, you now

'ave my permission and instructions to go below and stay there until you choose to appear on deck looking more like a British naval officer and less like a ruddy sunset. And,' 'e ses as the Number One turns away, 'if you will take my advice, next time you go and win anything like that by your 'eroism you'll 'ave the cigar instead.'

"What I'm dreading now, Sir, is 'im ringing that bell for the car to take 'im up to the Admiralty. Eighty-four 'e may be, Sir, but if they don't give 'im something they won't 'ave the 'eart to carry on with no war by the time 'e's finished with 'em."

A. M. C.

## Strategy

"I WONDER what would happen," said Edith thoughtfully, "if anybody were to apply Hitler's methods in private life? Supposing, for instance, Colonel Hogg suddenly



became dissatisfied with the boundaries of his garden and moved the fence while we were away for the week-end?"

"He would soon be told," I said firmly though coarsely, "where he got off."

Funnily enough Colonel Hogg called during the afternoon to complain about our new summer-house, which he said was so high that it kept the sun from his best herbaceous border.

"I admit it is a bit on the tall side," I said. "We inherited it from an uncle who had large ideas, but we got permission from the Council before we put it up."

The Colonel looked very annoyed.

"Everybody knows that you have friends on the Council," he said, "but I refuse to be ridden over rough-shod. You could easily remove the summer-house to the end of the garden where it would only keep the sun off John-son-Clitheroe's tomatoes, which never ripen anyway, so that whenever he gives a dinner-party we have to eat some loathsome stuff called green-tomato chutney."

"The summer-house," I said firmly, "will stay where it is."

The Colonel retired defeated, but it soon became clear that he intended to fight, and Edith said that he must have been studying Hitler's methods after all, because some men arrived with a lot of wire-netting and planks and poles, and we saw the Colonel superintending them just behind our summer-house with a triumphant smile. The jobbing gardener was busy digging up the plants, and I popped my head over the fence and asked the Colonel what was going on.

"I've decided to keep chickens," he said airily. "It is a public duty in these times to produce as much food as possible, and I intend to 'Say it with Eggs.' Any objection?"

"Our summer-house will be quite uninhabitable if you keep chickens behind it," I said, "and we gave up keeping chickens by mutual agreement years ago because of the rats. I don't know why chickens should attract rats, but in Little Wobbley they apparently do. This chicken scheme of yours is a clear unilateral breach of our 1932 agreement."

"When we agreed about chickens," said the Colonel loftily, "I did not know that you intended to sabotage my herbaceous border with a summer-house as high as the Taj Mahal. I regard your summer-house as a breach of the spirit of the 1932 agreement."

I went indoors to consult Edith, who dislikes rats, and she counselled unconditional surrender.

"Nothing of the sort," I said, "I don't mind moving the summer-house, but the Colonel's spoken word obviously has no value, so I shall only remove the summer-house if he gives me a written undertaking not to keep chickens."

I went back to the Colonel and explained my views, and he fell in with them at once.

"I'll come round straight away and sign the agreement," he said, "and as soon as it is signed I'll lend you my men to help move your summer-house."

We accepted this delicate offer, and by the end of the afternoon the summer-house was moved right to the other end of the garden. But the days passed and Colonel Hogg gave no sign of taking down his new chicken-run—in fact he had the audacity to start building an unsightly shed, presumably for the birds to live in. Edith and I lost no time in composing a strong note to him, and his answer proved him to be even more of a Hitler than we had suspected.

"There is nothing in our agreement," he said, "about turkeys."



"I hear he's going to open up another of those 'closing down' shops."

## Selina

**S**ELINA was a little dog  
Belonging to the idle ritch.  
A deb whose proud and flawless  
pose  
Had swept the board at countless  
shows.

Her heart was hard, her muzzle soft  
She held her plummy tail aloft  
When daily with the footman, Blair  
She stalked around to take the air  
At stated times in Berkeley Square.

Her mistress, Lady Scraggs, a dame  
Whom wealth had long made dead to  
shame,

Conceived the view that lordly pelf  
Should colour pet as well as self,  
And therefore ordered *Maison*

### Hocus

To turn Selina's top-knot crocus  
And dye her nails as deep a red  
As her own scarlet claws were  
bled.

She and Selina, thus made bright  
Were soon a very common sight  
At all the haunts of the noblesse  
Where blood was blood and Press was

Press,  
And waiters of the highest grade  
The tiniest bow-wow obeyed.

They often lunched at La Tourelle,  
Where Vigo, King of *maîtres-d'hôtel*,  
Had learned the tongue Selina spoke  
And never offered artichoke  
If what Selina had in mind  
Was something of a richer kind.  
The tittest bits of flocks of quail  
He often brought her in a pail  
Which Cartier had knocked her up  
When she was still a little pup.  
Behind her chair a waiter stood,  
Because, her manners not being  
good,

She rudely niblicked with her tail  
The lesser bits beyond the pail.  
On luscious *fricassées* of frog  
She sometimes gorged her inner dog.  
Not one but many geese had been  
Her *pâté* in its gilt *terrine*.  
She had a way with caviar  
And liked her whack of potted char  
(The fishy, not the Belcher sort  
It is my duty to report).  
And she was frequently enticed  
With *crustaces*, mayonnaised and iced.



At four o'clock the chauffeur, Dan,  
Who was a very decent man,  
Transferred her to the second Rolls,  
Surrounded her with rugs in shoals  
And then, with Blair, drove to the park,  
Round which they cruised till after  
dark—

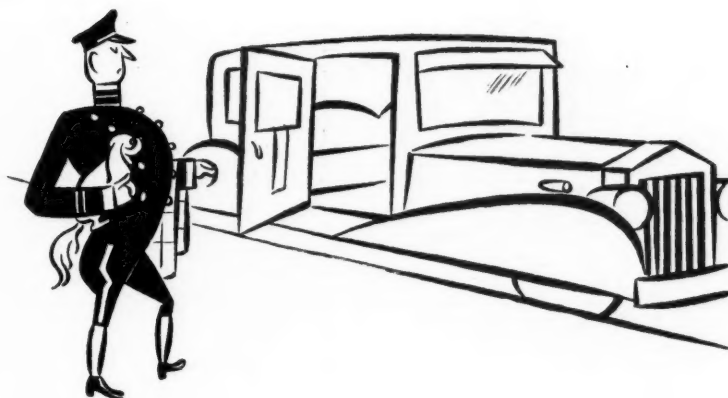
The dog, which neither could abide,  
Dyspeptically asleep inside.  
In short, as you can easily see,  
She was as spoilt as spoilt could be.  
Life offered nothing which could save  
The creature from an early grave,  
Or so it seemed; until one day,  
As she and Blair went out to pay  
A social call on the *élite*  
To whom both sides of Bruton Street  
Served as a special promenade  
From which suburban dogs were  
barred,

There slowly ambled into view  
A massive cur of ginger hue,  
A he-dog from the open spaces  
Who sadly lacked the Mayfair  
graces,  
Whose name—it caused him no regret—  
Was absent from the dogs' *Debrett*.

Selina, as she idly strolled  
Amongst the pets of rank and gold,  
Took sudden root with goggling eyes,  
For, to her own immense surprise,  
One ogle from the ginger cur  
Completely overbalanced her,  
And passion, which had up to then  
Been something far outside her ken,  
In spite of all the overtures  
A more than average deb endures  
From dogs from Eton and the Guards  
With coronets upon their cards  
And every sort of silly crest—  
Passion consumed Selina's breast,  
And Cupid shattered with his dart  
The armour-plating round her heart.

That was enough. The cur concurred.  
The two of them gave Blair the bird.  
In vain he shouted "'Ere! Come  
back!

Selina! 'Ere! I'll get the sack!"  
in vain, for love lends magic wings  
To dogs and cabbages and kings,  
And lights their eyes and spurs them on.  
Selina and her beau were gone. ERIC



DOUGLAS.

## At the Revue

"THE GATE REVUE" (AMBASSADORS)

I MUST say at once that this revue, which has had to suffer little at the



HEALTH AND BEAUTY

MISS HERMIONE GINGOLD

Censor's hands since it was on at the Gate, is so good, is indeed so immeasurably wittier than the chocolate-box frivolities usually served up as revue in the West End that in this article I must sternly ration my adjectives.

It is intimate, with a small cast. No attempt is made to dazzle the eye with expensive décor or stunt lighting. The tone is neither smart nor high-brow. In excellent lyrics and admirable sketches intelligent criticism with a sharp cutting-edge makes harvest of many a field. Current trends and fashionable foibles are held up to the hard test of satire. There are a number of good tunes. Sentiment is by no means barred, but it is never sentiment dragged in for its own sake, and for that reason it is moving. In short, this is a revue to warm the cockles of your heart, to make you laugh with that rich internal laughter which is the best, and to make you truly thankful that you live in a country where heavy-booted oafs have no power to neutralise irreverent entertainment. Perhaps parody and satire will be the last line of demarcation between the so-called democratic and totalitarian states. That they are still healthy in Britain, France and America is an exceedingly Good Thing.

Miss HERMIONE GINGOLD covers herself with glory. She is a master of understatement. Almost best in the whole show I like her song "Sick to Death of Love," the lament of a cinema-attendant going home after another ghastly bombardment of mush. It is very funny and very pathetic, and Miss GINGOLD sings it magnificently. Her "Beauty, Beauty" is an uproarious burlesque of women's fitness campaigns, and her song complaining that she is "Only a Medium Medium" hits hard at the bogus fringes of spiritualism. Her turn as a modern Lady of Shalott seemed to me a good deal thinner.

Mr. WALTER CRISHAM, who has a little more room to dance on this stage, is equally good. As a seller of dirty post-cards whose once-prosperous business has been smashed by the competition of Press photographs and post-War bathing fashions he sings a very well-written song with tragic effect. His preposterous adventure with a large balloon is a telling shot at amateur ballet, and his silent dance with Miss ALICIA MARLOWE called "Epilogue in Vienna" might aptly have been renamed "Epilogue in Prague." There were those who found it tactless while the policy of appeasement was being tried out; to-day it is no more direct comment on the end of freedom in Central Europe than is being made by the man-in-the-street.



TWINKLE, TWINKLE, FOREIGN STAR

MISS JOAN SWINSTEAD

First we see a Viennese officer and his lady waltzing; then they are disturbed and part, and a moment later we see him writhing behind barbed wire. The

huge figure of a soldier wearing a steel-helmet of unmistakable shape has been substituted for the swastika used at the Gate. The whole turn is very dramatic.

Number Three of this talented cast is Miss JOAN SWINSTEAD, whose cool



BUBBLE DANCER

MR. WALTER CRISHAM

humour and charmingly ironic personality is put to good use. In "The Bitzner" she gives a cruel parody of continental cabaret stars, and she is the life and soul of a number of other turns. Then there is Miss GABRIELLE BRUNE, who sings a new song, "Transatlantic Lullaby," delightfully (though I do not agree with the claim that the song itself is the "hit" of the show), Miss KAY YOUNG, Mr. MICHAEL WILDING, Mr. DAVID EVANS and Mr. JACK McNAUGHTON. They are all clever in their several ways. Of the joint turns I have only space to mention "Musical Snobs," "Washing Up to Schubert" (from Mr. Punch's pages) and "A Smack at the Blacks," a grand burlesque of KIPLING-cum-WREN-cum-NOVELLO. I still think "The Village Inn" isn't worth its place. It doesn't work. (If the resident drinkers in the second scene are yokels, it is silly to make them look and sound like novelists; while if they are novelists they are as much to blame as anyone for ruining the character of the pub.)

The main authors are Miss DIANA MORGAN and Mr. ROBERT MACDERMOT, and most of the music is by Mr. GEOFFREY WRIGHT. The production is Mr. NORMAN MARSHALL's. They are all much to be congratulated. Do go. ERIC.

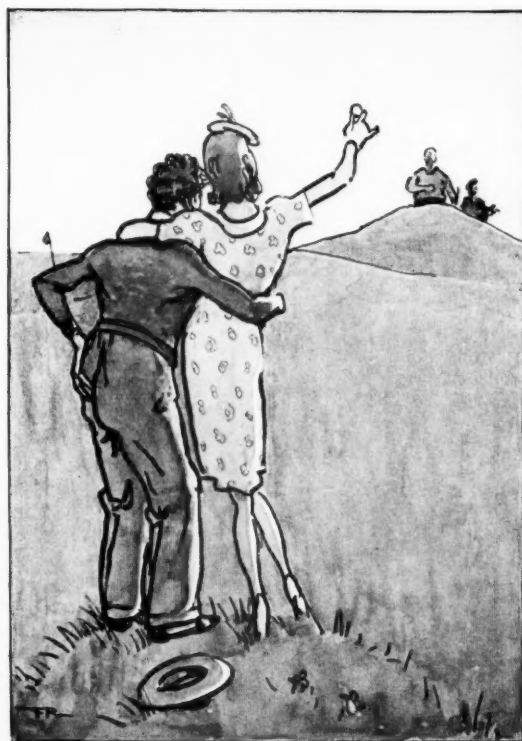




*"Funny how the bluebells make the wood look full of smoke!"*



THE SPRING ROUND (1)

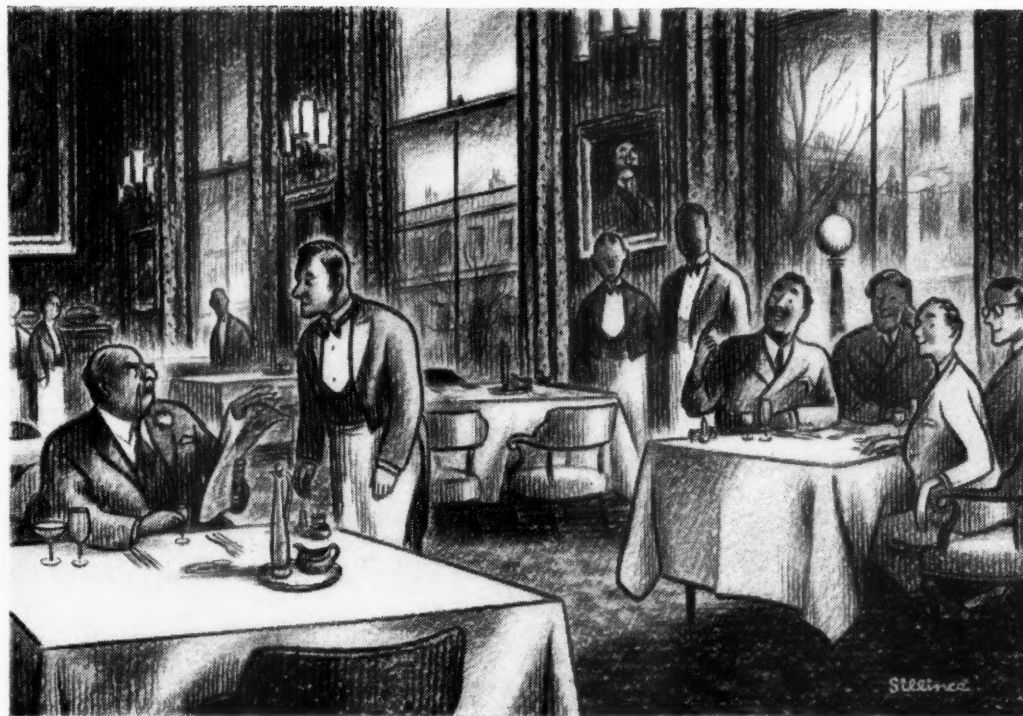


THE SPRING ROUND (2)



*"I think it's thrilling—just us two out here, wrestling with Nature!"*





*"Lord Bonehead presents his compliments, Your Grace, and asks—should you be alone—if you will muck in at his table."*

### *Ballade of March Hunting, 1939*

**I**F I decided not to hunt to-day  
Because I ought to earn my bread and  
cheese,

Because I have my income tax to pay,  
And doctor's bills and education fees,  
To-morrow morning fate might add to these  
Some quite insuperable circumstance:

I fancy it will snow to-night, or freeze—  
Let us go hunting while we have the chance.

Sports that might once have tempted me astray  
Are now forsaken by their devotees;  
Wild-fowlers all have put their guns away  
And turned reluctant from the Hebrides.  
The winter-sporters have brought home their  
skis  
Or gone to gamble in the South of France,

There they may bask in sunshine if they please—  
Let us go hunting while we have the chance.

Before another season, who can say  
Whether the wars will all be overseas  
Or whether we shall rush into the fray  
(Backed by our old allies, the Portuguese)?

If we can neither conquer nor appease  
The Teuton's re-established arrogance,  
Next winter we may all be refugees—  
Let us go hunting while we have the chance.

#### *Envoi*

Prince! You are going over at the knees,  
Your wind grows thicker as your years advance,  
I think you have navicular disease—  
Let us go hunting while we have the chance.

## American Slang

A Glossary for Elder Readers

**Y**OU may recall (doubtless with a wince) that Harlem slang was dealt with here at our last meeting and that the piece concluded with the threat that we would examine further specimens of Harlem slang when next we met. For the benefit of those new faces among you let me explain that Harlem slang, or jive, is the peculiar type of slang used by negroes living in the section of New York called Harlem, sometimes known as the Land of the Midnight Sun-Tan. The terms mentioned are, almost without

exception, used exclusively by these folk and are unknown to most

**Pinks.** White people. Apparently the Caucasian does not look as pale of face to the black man as to the red man. Another term used by Harlem-ites to designate a white person is the term "ofay." A moving picture with white actors is an ofay movie; a white orchestra is an ofay band. Speaking of entertainment, it is scarcely necessary to point out that coloured folk seem to have a natural aptitude for the *Main kick.* The stage. Many of

them are particularly good when it comes to

**Laying some iron.** Tap-dancing (a reference to the metal plates on tap-dancing shoes). Their dances are often a real

**Mess.** Something good. (Note that this is an opposite meaning from that given the term by pinks, to whom a mess is something bad, undistinguished or poorly done—*ex.*: "Ain't that dame a mess, though?") A dance may be a mess, or if it's good enough may even be the

**Mezz.** Something supreme. "Boy, ain't this a mess?" "A mess? Why, man, it's the mezz!" In fact it's

**Kopasetic.** Absolutely all right. This term was coined many years ago by that peerless layer of iron, Bill Robinson. When a performer's act is really the mezz the audience often

**Falls out.** Is overcome by emotion. Like all the others, this term must be used with discretion. To say, for instance, that *Romeo's* tender words beneath the balcony were so touching that *Juliet* fell out gives a peculiar impression of just what took place. Uninitiated people might even think upon hearing this that *Juliet* had been

**Setting her gauge.** Getting intoxicated. When a performer's act is mellow (all right) an audience usually rewards him with a salvo of

**Mitt pounding.** Applause. Of course if his act is sad (very bad), then the audience as like as not begins to be

**Whipped up.** Exhausted. The wise thing to do of course is to

**Cut out.** Leave. If enough people cut out, then after the show the performer will undoubtedly be

**Evil.** In a bad temper; angry (*syn.*: salty). He will be evil because he will not be able to signify (boast) that he was

**Too much.** Marvellous, wonderful. The fellow may even stay salty for a whole black and bright (night and day) until the following

**Early black.** Evening. At least he will not feel like

**Having himself a ball.** Having a party, staging a celebration. Of course maybe the fellow is no good anyway; perhaps he is cut-rate (a low cheap person) and nobody we should care to

**Dig.** Meet. "I'll plant you now and dig you later" means "I'll leave you now and meet you later." "Dig" also means to see, or to look. For example, "Dig that chick on your left raise" would be a suggestion that you observe the young lady on your left side. "Dig" also means to comprehend, to understand. For instance, do you dig Spinoza? Personally I always found him a little hard to

**Latch on.** Comprehend; get wise to.



"And now, in honour of our American guests, we are serving corn on the cob."



"This is the Professor's study, Johnson, and please don't disarrange anything."

While I give Mr. Spinoza credit for making a serious effort to lay his racket (get across his ideas), there are times when I find his teachings as confusing as some of the lyrics sung by the incomparable Mr. Cab Calloway—times when I don't believe I could latch on his jive if I were to sit down and do nothing but read him for a whole

*Set of seven brights.* A week. But it must not be denied that, while latching on Mr. Spinoza's jive is hard, Mr. Spinoza's jive is

*Hard.* Good; fine. At a flower-show one might say, "That's a hard petunia you're exhibiting there, Mrs. Braithwaite," for which one would doubtless be rewarded with a hard (in the ordinary pink sense) stare from Mrs. Braithwaite. Considering this, let us avoid Mrs. B. and get back to Harlem, where on Saturday nights one may see gates (men) and chicks (girls) sliding their jibs (talking animatedly) as they stroll along

*Togged to the bricks.* Magnificently attired; dressed from head to foot in the height of prevailing fashion. Many gates somehow manage to be togged to the bricks when they haven't any money in their pockets except for some

*Beat-up.* Small change. However, there is always the hope that somewhere they will run on to a little

*Jelly.* Anything free on the house (*syn.*: freeby). Sometimes a gate while sipping a drink will inquire hopefully of a bartender, "Is this drink a freeby?" whereupon nine times out of nine the bartender will put his large hands on the bar, lean forward with a forbidding look and say,

"Neigho, Pops!" "Nothing doing, pal!" Many gates, it might be added, seldom have more than a little beat-up for the simple reason that they so heartily dislike having to

*Slave.* Work, whether at arduous labour or not. And that just about brings us to the end of our field-trip through Harlem, except for one last term which we should latch on, the term

*Locked up.* Acquired exclusively. When, for example, a young man has wooed and won a maid it is proper to say that he's "got that chick locked up." As a further exercise in the use of this expression let us translate the well-known love-story formula, "Boy meets girl, boy loses girl, boy gets girl" into Harlem jive, which would

give us something like "Gate digs chick, gate loses chick, gate locks up chick." And everything is kopasetic ever after.

o o

### The Restless People

BEYOND the Heath are lowlands, behind the Wold is fen: We've laboured here for one full year and now move on again.

For Ladyday is flitting time, and waggoners are few, so my two sons and I we go to try a farm that's new.

We change and chop about a lot, from farm to farm we go; and in a ten-mile ring there's not a farm we do not know.

There's not a field that's arable we've never ploughed or sown, and we shall go from place to place until we own our own.

Ay, each year we shall flit again but know well in our hearts we'll not go out our ten-mile ring, for those are foreign parts.



## Too Many Cooks

**I** DON'T know how things are in your household, but we seem to have far too many cooks. Many of them are mere birds of passage who arrive late at night, eat a hearty meal and sleep the clock round, only to be summoned next morning by a telegram announcing the imminent decease of a dearly-loved relation. None of our cooks ever has a dying relation nearer than a hundred miles away; even the closest relations are distant. They go, never to return, and with them goes the money they invariably borrow for railway fares.

Now and again, however, a cook stays with us long enough to unpack and allow us to appreciate her idiosyncrasies.

My favourite cook was Patsy. She was with us when I was very young and she was always on my side. If I had been forced to eat rice-pudding because it was good for me, Patsy was always waiting for me in the kitchen with a large spoon and a pot of strawberry jam. "Little boys was never made to be done good to," she used to say. She taught me multiplication by her own method, known as "Isn'ts." My father came into the kitchen one day and heard me reciting "Twice two isn't three or five, twice three isn't five or seven, so we'll just take it easy in between," and told Patsy that I couldn't be expected to run before I could walk. "Indade, Sorr," she said, "it's only because no one has ever taught him."

Valerie came to us in 1918 and spent all her spare time writing to her "soldier friend." We had rather a shock when we discovered that she had been corresponding very affectionately with seven soldiers, six of whom called at our house within two weeks after the Armistice. Valerie said she loved them all, and asked my father to make up her mind for her. On his advice she married the suitor with the highest rank, and very soon S.-M. Joe Tipple was enduring the novel experience of being made to perform at the double the merciless commands of a seven-stone baby-faced wife.

Then there was Isabella. She wrote and told us that she was a good plain cook. She was engaged by return of

post and arrived with four cabin-trunks and a tinted photograph of Lewis Waller. She was very good and very plain, but she was no cook. She always blamed the gas for her culinary catastrophes. "They make it different from what they do up north," she said, "and there's not so much warmth in the heat here." She was often given a month's notice, but she never made any preparations for departure. She said she was very happy and we weren't to worry because everything would be fine when she was acclimatized to the gas. Eventually we got rid of her by giving her a very misleading reference which spoke in warm praise of her unique capabilities. We like to think that her new employer's sudden death was simply a coincidence.

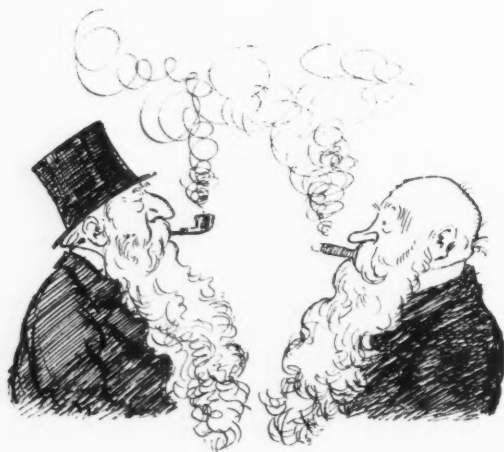
She was followed by Mrs. Tukeham, who demanded a fortnight's holiday with pay but never took it. "So long as the principle's established," she said, "I'm all for carrying on as hitherto." Things always happened to her on her free days: handsome strangers tried to lure her away, chimney-pots crashed on the very spot where she had just been standing, former admirers met her and entertained her "regardless."

She made one nasty blunder, however. On one of her free days an evening paper printed an account of a daylight robbery at a shop in Sutton. Mrs. Tukeham came home full of it; she had seen it all—a masked man rushing from the shop with his hands dripping money, a waiting car, a quick get-away. No, she hadn't said anything to the police—she knew we wouldn't like the publicity—but it was a sight she would never forget. Next day the shopkeeper admitted to the police that he had invented the entire story. Mrs. Tukeham was badly shaken and declared that she didn't know what things were coming to when newspaper proprietors had nothing better to do than deceive an innocent woman. We never found out what she actually did on her free days; we suspected her of "ghosting" for a popular novelist.

Mary was noteworthy for her habit of tacking "um" on the end of most words. "Have you trussed the chicken, Mary?" my mother would say. "The chickenum? Yes-sum," said Mary. In time we all tended to say "There's a ringum at the doorum," or "Well, I do declareum if it isn't rainingum." In the vain hope of preserving the wells of English undefiled my father dismissed her. Next year the talkies burst upon us.

Dagmar the Dane was big, blonde and incredibly flirtatious. "To-nide I walk wid a young gentle Englishman," she said once, "but he talk abote bacon and butter and never me, so I leaf him for goods." She surprised us by serving goose stuffed with prunes and apples instead of our usual Christmas turkey. We all enjoyed it, but my father felt it was wrong to foist a Continental Christmas on a family like ours. "What's going to become of tradition?" he said, and my mother shocked him by replying that tradition never tasted as delicious as that goose. Dagmar and her Danish husband visited us last year; they took us to dinner at the Savoy because, her husband said, "you amuse Dagmar when she is here to learn English and incidentally cook."

Ernest was a moody male cook imported by my father. When he felt jovial his cooking was exquisite, but all too often our meals were little better than lukewarm gloom. He must have been in love, or anxious to become a writer, because he was for ever writing free verse on odd scraps of



*"I wash mine with petrol, but of course I don't let the insurance people know."*





"And 'oo asked for your *unsolicited opinion*, anyway?"

paper. I remember once our grocer returned a shopping-list at the bottom of which he had written, "P. T. Over, Madam." On the back was one of Ernest's *vers libre* beginning, "Take thou my loving heart and give me back my hope of happiness." Against this the grocer had written, "Dear Madam, I am afraid there must be some mistake.—Yours, etc., J. Tunk." The last time we heard of Ernest he was prospering as the proprietor of Ye Olde Oak Tree Café and Snack Bar somewhere in Surrey. We consider him to be one of the few modern poets to have made good.

Four days ago our newest cook descended upon us—or perhaps I should say she condescended upon us. At least a dozen times already she has told me about Major Kibbidge. "Ah," she says, "Major Kibbidge was a Someone; Indian Army retired, you know. He was a lovely gentleman. Ah, well!"

She leaves no doubt in my mind that she doesn't consider

me lovely—perhaps not even a gentleman—and I feel my position keenly because I have never been nearer the Indian Army than within a stone's-throw of the contingent at the Coronation. I think she'll stay, though, because when I mentioned last night quite casually that too many cooks spoil the broth, she said, "Yes, Sir, far too many; but never me. My broth is a byword." Also I have discovered that she has positively no relations. We are all going to do our best to give her every satisfaction.

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"A range of machines may always be seen at the premises of Messrs. Jenkin & Purser, of 970 vibration or hammering saddle-shocks Wimborne-road, Bournemouth."—*Local Paper*.

Let us know if you're not quite comfortable at your present address, Messrs. Jenkin & Purser.



"Haven't you anything better to do than chase a poor helpless fox with that croquet mallet?"

### Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### A Dublin Childhood

THE richly imaginative apprehension of common life which gives the plays of Mr. SEAN O'CASEY their particular virtue informs every sentence—and what sentences some of them are!—of the tale of his childhood which he has called *I Knock at the Door* (MACMILLAN, 10/6). Imagination, indeed, often based no doubt on information received, but sometimes, one must suppose, on nothing more solid than probable conjecture, has as large a part in the autobiography as in the plays; for Mr. O'CASEY (or *Johnny Casside*), who writes of himself in the third person, describes not only his own birth but the death of a brother before he was born, his sister's most intimate thoughts on her wedding morning, and a conversation between his admirable mother—the heroine of the book—and a very repulsive clergyman which took place when he was admittedly fast asleep. And these passages are as vivid and essentially as authentic as those devoted to events which there is no reason to suppose are not actually remembered. Those events are for the most part pretty drab. The *Cassides* were bitterly poor, they were Protestants and "Loyalists" in a world of Catholics and Home Rulers, and *Johnny* suffered from a disease of the eyes which kept him in almost constant torture and twilight. But the coloured fancies and the zest for living of a budding poet triumphed and have found expression in a breathless exuberance of narrative which, though it may be shocking to old-fashioned purists, will be to others a fascinating new literary experience.

#### "Great Unhappy Hero"

Are we becoming "CLIVE-conscious"? Until recently the man in the street had but vague recollections of the founder of our Indian Empire. He might have heard of the siege of Arcot, the battle of Plassey, the story of attempted suicide

and the duel which forms the subject of one of ROBERT BROWNING's poems. There was also of course MACAULAY—if anyone nowadays reads the once-so-famous essays. But now, after *Clive of India*, comes a full-length Life from Mr. MERVYN DAVIES, the biographer of WARREN HASTINGS. *Clive of Plassey* (NICHOLSON AND WATSON, 25/-) makes a handsome and imposing volume and does not err on the side of hero-worship. Mr. DAVIES is clearly of opinion that justice should be done to those less fortunate men whose deeds were too often obscured by the great man's shadow—men like STRINGER LAWRENCE, EYRE COOTE, FORDE and, later, ADAMS and HECTOR MUNRO. It was ROBERT ORME, the historian of India, who was chiefly responsible for the heroic tradition. Entering the East India service at Madras on the same day as CLIVE, and his earliest friend, he was dazzled by the early exploits—the capture and defence of Arcot—and started the legend of his hero's infallibility. But the facts about Plassey show plainly enough that CLIVE was not entirely master of the situation. There for the first time he had under his command regular officers who knew something about their business. EYRE COOTE was one of them, and it is rather startling to find that without him there might have been no Plassey at all. It is also a little surprising to learn that CLIVE so soon ceased to be a popular hero at home. Even to his own generation he was as much villain as hero. Between the two conceptions his present historian strives valiantly to steer a middle course.

#### Under My Wig

When a beautiful heroine of melodrama on the stage of a Cork theatre appealed to high heaven for advice because her estate had been filched away, a voice from the audience responded: "Object that the document is insufficiently stamped!" When counsel, about to address his gentlemen of the jury, laid a wager with fellow-counsel that he would use only words of one syllable, he began: "Now, you twelve good men and true in that box." When a judge wished to be particularly scathing to a prisoner he told him he left the dock with no other stain on his character than that he had been acquitted by a jury from Limerick. In *The Old Munster Circuit* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 10/6) Mr. MAURICE HEALY has joyfully surrendered to a tide of pre-War Irish



The flat below retaliates.



TOWARDS THE CLOSE OF THE SEASON

Gentleman. "WELL, TOM, THERE'S NO SCENT AGAIN!"  
Huntsman (who looks upon Spring time with profound melancholy). "SCENT, SIR! NO, SIR! NOR I DON'T SEE HOW THERE CAN BE ANY SCENT NOW THEM STINKING VIOLETS IS ALL IN BLOOM."

John Leech, March 29th, 1856.

memories, where cases lost or won or fairly stolen jostle with preposterous squalls between judge and barrister and incredible devices and desires of the legal imagination, in an atmosphere of affectionate malice and prejudice that only Ireland could tolerate. If occasionally the stories and the recollections and the O'Briens crowd so thick and fast that no Englishman can be sure he has taken the point or disentangled the personality, the volume remains one of the most cheerfully outrageous handbooks of court stratagems ever brought to the bar of public opinion.

The U.S.A. G.P.

Told in a style which intertwines  
Technical lore with raucy jesting,  
*The Horse and Buggy Doctor* shows  
Just how the country medicos,

Tireless, or anyhow unrelenting,  
Tackled on nineteenth-century lines  
Patients a six-hour drive away  
Who might be really sick or not  
And frequently the fee forgot  
In Kansas, U.S.A.

ARTHUR E. HERTZLER's story's based  
On his own hard career of healing;  
And he so pleasantly lays bare  
A bitter struggle and a rare  
Humane discretion in revealing  
The sources to which ills are traced  
That, far above the books we've read  
Of late, all quackery and swank,  
We place as in the highest rank  
This from the BODLEY HEAD.



### Back Numbers Bicester Way

A hamlet riding like a solitary ship among wave upon wave of corn, *Lark Rise* (OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 8/6) thoroughly deserves to have its Victorian portrait painted before its bygone graces are forgotten. And Miss FLORA THOMPSON—who as the stonemason's small daughter, grown up, has this corner of North Oxon engraved upon her heart—proves the ideal annalist of the isolated years that preceded the Diamond Jubilee. Wages were ten shillings a week; families were large; girls went out to service at thirteen and helped to balance the family budget; water was scarce; sanitation unknown; but neither "nerves" nor indigestion existed; there were no invalids; and the village wise woman supervised the village births for a decade without losing a patient. Miss THOMPSON does not pretend that conditions were Utopian. The local farmer was a shameless exploiter of labour, the lady of the manor an ineffective and unpopular encumbrance. But life was extraordinarily happy because everyone made the most of what cost little or nothing; and there was an almost lyrical sense of home-bred security which compulsory inspection in time of peace—and the threat of compulsory billeting in time of war—seems bent on destroying for ever.

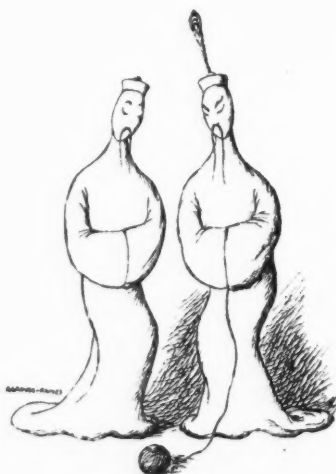
### Comes the Blind Fury

It was *Holmes*, if you remember, who heard the stifled cries of a tortured child in every smiling homestead he observed from a railway-carriage window—it hadn't occurred to *Watson* that the smiling homestead was an unparalleled *mise-en-scène* for crime. But it has of course occurred to Mr. EDEN PHILLIPOTT; and his latest novel takes a particularly romantic Devon farm and a full cast of genial and easy-going yokels, only to allow one of the most unpleasant matriarchs in fiction to dominate the gentle scene. *Mehala Dymond*, sole heiress to Clearbrook, is possessed with a particular loathing for her unfortunate eldest-born *Bennie*; and only *Mehala's* well-meaning spouse—who wedded his master's daughter just in time to give *Bennie* a name—knows why the sprightliest child in their otherwise humdrum family is anathema to his mother. It is not, however, until his grandfather begins to favour *Bennie* that *Mehala* sets definitely to work to remove a rival. A very clever *dénouement*—introducing a gay new life for *Bennie* just as his mother is working Atropos-like to cut the old one—interposes a bizarre but acceptable solution to the dark problems of *Thorn in Her Flesh* (MURRAY, 7/6).

### The Paladin Superlative

HERMANN GOERING is credited not only with holding a score of offices of State, each with its own distinctive

responsibilities and uniform, but with being the creator of the new German Air Force and the organiser of the Four-Year Plan. Remembering his share in the restoration of Germany to a position of influence in the affairs of the world which, like it or not, is a miracle of recovery under difficulties, many readers will be attracted to the translation of ERICH GRITZBACH's biographical study—*Hermann Goering: The Man and His Work* (HURST AND BLACKETT, 8/6). There they will learn that "calm, tenacious, with unbending will and untiring thought, he works day and night," and this would appear to be the whole secret of his success, for these words or others to the same effect occur on nearly every page, interspersed with loyally frequent but equally nebulous references to the inspiring influence of the FUEHRER. There is a kind of passionate lip-service to the authoritarian State in this volume, with occasional glints of real medieval intolerance, but much of it is dreary stuff to read. Germany certainly has not been restored by mere round-mouthed sentiment and fluffy generalities, but only in the later chapters of this volume, which are concerned with GOERING's early life and part in the war, does anything like a real portrait of HITLER's sturdy lieutenant emerge.



"At the last Imperial reception I finished a very nice cardigan for my daughter."

### Feuds and Films

Anyone who is unfamiliar with the American language as written by Mr. ELLERY QUEEN may find that the problem to be found in *The Four of Hearts* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6) is by no means the only puzzle. A glossary would assuredly be useful to readers whose education has in one respect been neglected. In his handling of the mystery in connection with the brutal murder of two famous film-stars, Mr. QUEEN is most generous in giving clear opportunities to put a hand upon the criminal. Indeed the leading actors of the melodrama are so few in number that, unless a complete surprise is sprung (which with this author is in the last degree improbable), choice among the legitimately possible candidates is limited. Some of Mr. QUEEN's admirers may not be convinced that he is entirely happy in the film world of Hollywood, but at any rate in this story of love and hatred he has given them a graphic picture of life as lived under the full glare of publicity.

### Mr. Punch on Tour

AT Blackburn, from April 8th to May 6th, the Exhibition of the Original Work of Modern *Punch* Artists will be on view at the "Lewis" Textile Museum. The Exhibition will be shown later at Lancaster, Burnley and Mansfield.

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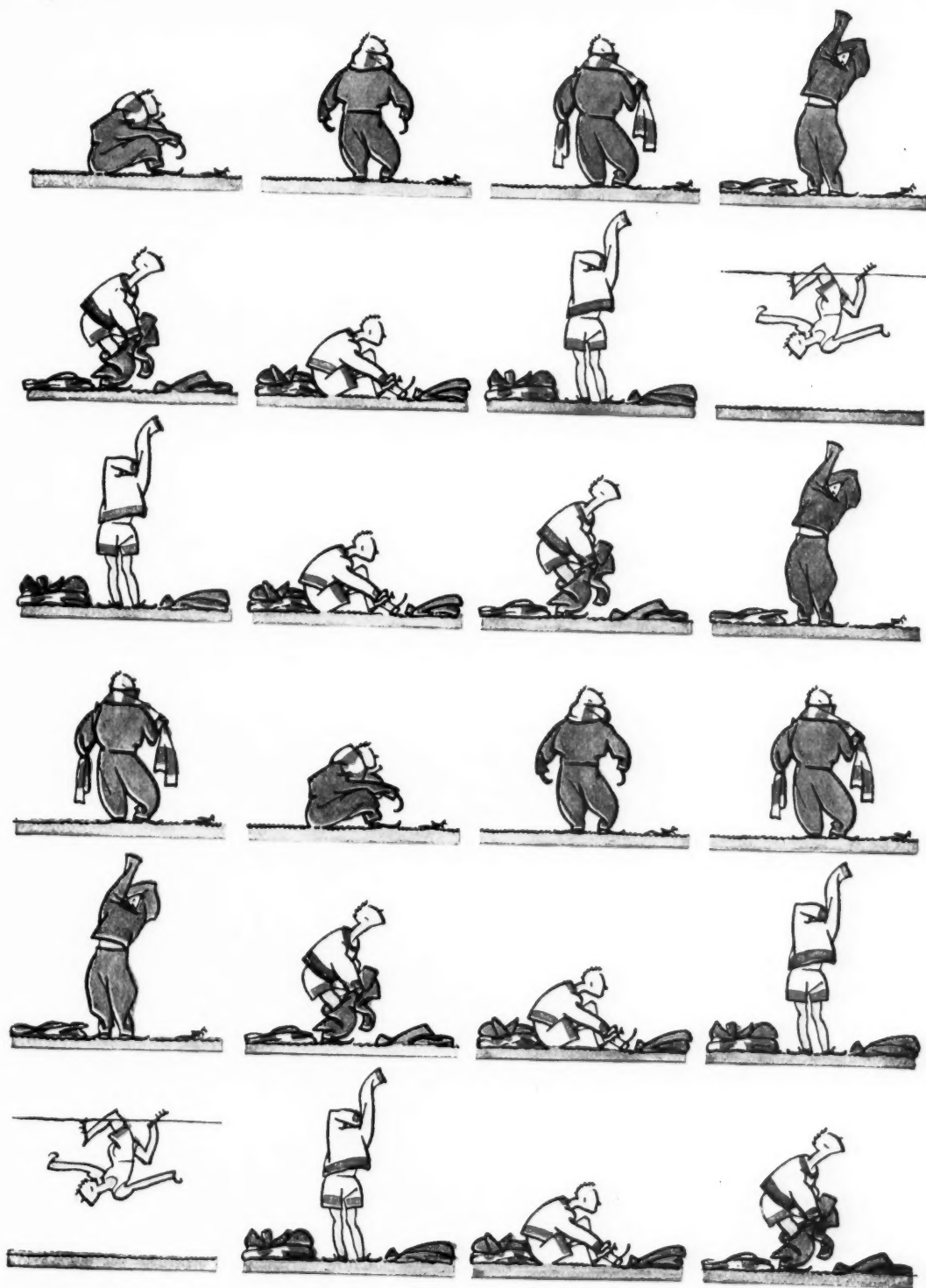
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